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DAVE DORMAN'S

RAIL

I N T E R V I E W



Along with his duties with Sketch Magazine, **Bob Hickey** has been the creative force behind Blood & Roses, StormQuest and Tempered Steele. He oversees production work at Sacred Studios which is currently packaging Parts Unknown for Image Comics and has a new Blood and Roses series in the works along with his new creator owned series Race Danger. Bob is one of the co-founders of Blue Line Productions.
www.bluelinepro.com
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Joe Corroney is the instructor for Comic Book-Cartoon Illustration Class and Electronic Illustration Class at the Columbus College of Art and Design in Columbus, Ohio. He has illustrated for a variety of comic book publishers including Dead-Kid for Knight Press, Blood and Roses for Sacred Studios, Green Lantern for DC Comics, Parts Unknown for Image, and his creator-owned title for World Famous Comics, Death Avenger. He has also illustrated for White Wolf Publishing, Microsoft's Age of Empires trading card game, Men In Black for Sony, and Star Trek for the Paramount Pictures licensee, Last Unicorn Games. Since 1997, Joe has been providing Star Wars artwork for Lucasfilm books and magazines and his currently illustrating for the new Star Wars role-playing game from Wizards of the Coast. To see more of Joe's artwork, visit his official website at www.jocorroney.com. You can also view online galleries of his published and unpublished Star Wars art at the following websites...
www.theforce.net
www.echostation.com
www.rebelpilots.com/
 Contact Joe at jcorroney@earthlink.net



Beau Smith created and writes Parts Unknown currently at Image Comics, writer of The Undertaker for Chaos Comics, The Tenth, Wynonna Earp, Spawn: Book Of Souls, Wolverine/Shi, Batman/Wildcat and the upcoming cross over-Xena/Wonder Woman and several Star Wars stories for Dark Horse.
www.sacredstudios.com/partsunknown



Clint McElroy has worked in the media for over 25 years. He is currently working as the top-rated afternoon disc jockey at the number one radio station in his market. He has worked for the CBS radio network, covering the Tampa Bay Buccaneers for Brent Musberger's "Monday Night Football" radio broadcasts. He has hosted television programs ranging from real-estate shows to late-night monster movies....and has even moderated the gubernatorial debates for the state of West Virginia. He has made over a hundred appearances on local television news broadcasts over the last 25 years. He has written for the "Comics Buyers Guide" and is currently the writer of a regular column in "Huntington Quarterly Magazine". He also knows the world of comics. A collector his entire life, Clint (along with Beau Smith) co-wrote and co-produced the popular "Comicast" audio fanzine in the 1990's. He worked as host and contributor on the "Comics Vision" video series. Clint has written titles like "Green Hornet" and "Illegal Aliens", and created the mini-series "Blood is the Harvest" for Eclipse and the very successful "Green Hornet: Dark Tomorrow" mini-series for Now. He also did the movie adaptations for films including "Freejack", "Universal Soldier", and "The Three Ninjas".



Flint Henry's comic career began in the waning days of the independent market of the '80's, where his frenetic and violent style enjoyed a popular run on the fondly remembered Grimjack at First Comics. Over the years to follow, some personal favorites include Lawdog; a creator owned character done with longtime friend Chuck Dixon from Marvel/Epic, as well as numerous Batman related projects from DC. He's also produced a variety of comic product for Todd Toys (now McFarlane Toys), Image, SQP Inc, and Chaos!, as well as Eclipse, Dark Horse, Palladium, and others.

Tom Bierbaum, with wife Mary, has scripted such comics as Legion of Super-Heroes and The Heckler for DC Comics, Xena and Return to Jurassic Park for Topps Comics, Star for Image Comics and Dead Kid Adventures, a creator owned project by Knight Press.



M² a.k.a. Mike Maydak has been taken under-wing as the patawan in training at the Blue Line Pro ranch. He is learning much from the experienced crew at Sketch about the comic industry and has mastered the technique of "getting lunch". He often contributes in the form of graphic design, writing, and editorial work. He is currently attending school at NKU with a Journalism major. On the side, he works on his fantasy novel.



Paul Sizer teaches graphic design at Western Michigan University, runs his own freelance design and illustration business, and in his spare time writes, illustrates and designs his comic book LITTLE WHITE MOUSE, published by BLP Comics. Paul lives and works in Kalamazoo, Michigan. See more of Pauls work at: www.littlewhitemouse.com.

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Bob Hickey creative director/publisher

Flint Henry senior editor

Mike Maydak associate editor, letters

Editorial Contributors

Beau Smith, Tom Bierbaum, Joe Corroney, Mike Maydak, Clint McElroy, Bob Hickey, Flint Henry, Paul Sizer, Dave Dorman, Michael Clark.

Artistic Contributors

Joe Corroney, Bob Hickey, Dave Dorman, Paul Sizer, Kurt Einhaus

Cover Illustration Dave Dorman

Blue Line Pro Pre-Press Design

For Advertising Information:

SKETCH MAGAZINE

8385 U.S. Highway 42

Florence, KY 41042

sketchads@bluelinepro.com

<http://www.bluelinepro.com>

ph: 859-282-0096 / fax: 859-282-9412

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Blue Line Pro

Blue Line Productions,
8385 U.S. Highway 42,
Florence, KY 41042
(859) 282-0096
BLUelinePRO.COM

CEO - Mike Hickey

Creative Director - Bob Hickey

Circulation - Carol Doolin

Comic books are a fun media and one of the few that anyone could create their own visions to share with others. Blue Line Productions goals are aimed toward the enhancement of art through knowledge and quality art supplies. No matter what it takes we make sure that the reader has the information that they are wanting.

Are you a professional working in the comics field?
Would you like to help the next group of creators?

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sketch@bluelinepro.com

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A Note...

The market is ever changing. It's believed that the printed future of comics lays in trade paperbacks, and with a fairly good reception at the American Book Expo, it may be true. But can you create 100 plus pages before you receive any income? It would be hard. So we continue to need the monthly books to help submit incomes. But how do you move enough monthlies to make it profitable? I don't have all the answers, but I believe it will be a combination of several things: eComics, drug store corner racks, public and school libraries and conventions, just to name a few. So if you've been successful in any of these areas, or something that's not covered here, be sure to let us now so we can pass it along.

I would like to especially thank Dave Dorman for going above and beyond the call of duty for this issue. Not only did he give us a great interview but he also contributed a painting progressive for his new project RAIL. I've known Dave for a few years and he's one of the nicest creators you'll ever come across. If you ever see him at one of the conventions, be sure to stop by his table and see his work in person. And check out RAIL from Image Comics.

Trade shows. Would you be interested in going to a weekend trade show to sit in on seminars from pros working in the field? These pros would discuss pencilling, inking, coloring, marketing, publishing, etc. Should these seminars be based around an actual convention? Would you take the time to travel to a show and sit in on classes to learn more about this industry and your trade? We are talking about putting on a Comic Book Trade Show. I've got to convince the other contributors that this show would be beneficial for the attendees and for promoters. I personally would like to see a show with no comic convention attached, just a weekend to learn and polish our trade. Other industries do weekend trade shows with such trade topics as Airbrush, Graphic Designer etc. Let me know what you think.

I also would like to tip my hat to Lucasfilm Ltd. for allowing us to print Joe Corroney's Star Wars illustrations. As always, all the creators have given us a jam-packed issue filled with the best information the industry has to offer. Next issue, Ed McGuinness on Superman.

Take care,



Bob Hickey

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by flint henry



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DAVE DORMAN'S RAIL

Cover Paint Progressive

by Dave Dorman

The idea for the cover for the RAIL graphic novel was to introduce the two main characters from the series, Edge and Iguana. I wanted to have an action scene with the emphasis on the figures yet still show a bit of a feel for the texture of the story, what I call a "motorcycle western".

The beginnings of the ideas start with thumbnail sketches of the ideas. No real detail, just blocking out the composition and design (example A) After I decide which thumbnail is the best to represent what I want to show then I do a larger thumbnail (example B). This lets me block in more of the figures and compositional elements, and I can start working in smaller details as well.



example A

At this point I know all the elements that will be going in the piece and I can arrange for shooting my photo reference. I have friends to come over and model for me. In this particular case it was Del Stone, my scripter for the RAIL book, who posed for both of the characters. I also collected photos of the type of locomotive I wanted for the background, and I had a model of a 1938 Harley that I used for the foreground motorcycles.



example B

After the reference photos are shot, I begin the drawing. From this point on the drawings I do will be the actual size of the painting. I do all my drawing on vellum tracing paper, which allows me to work over previous drawings and make easy changes to make the art more dynamic. The first full pencil is very rough, blocking in all the elements to make things work visually within the frame (example C).

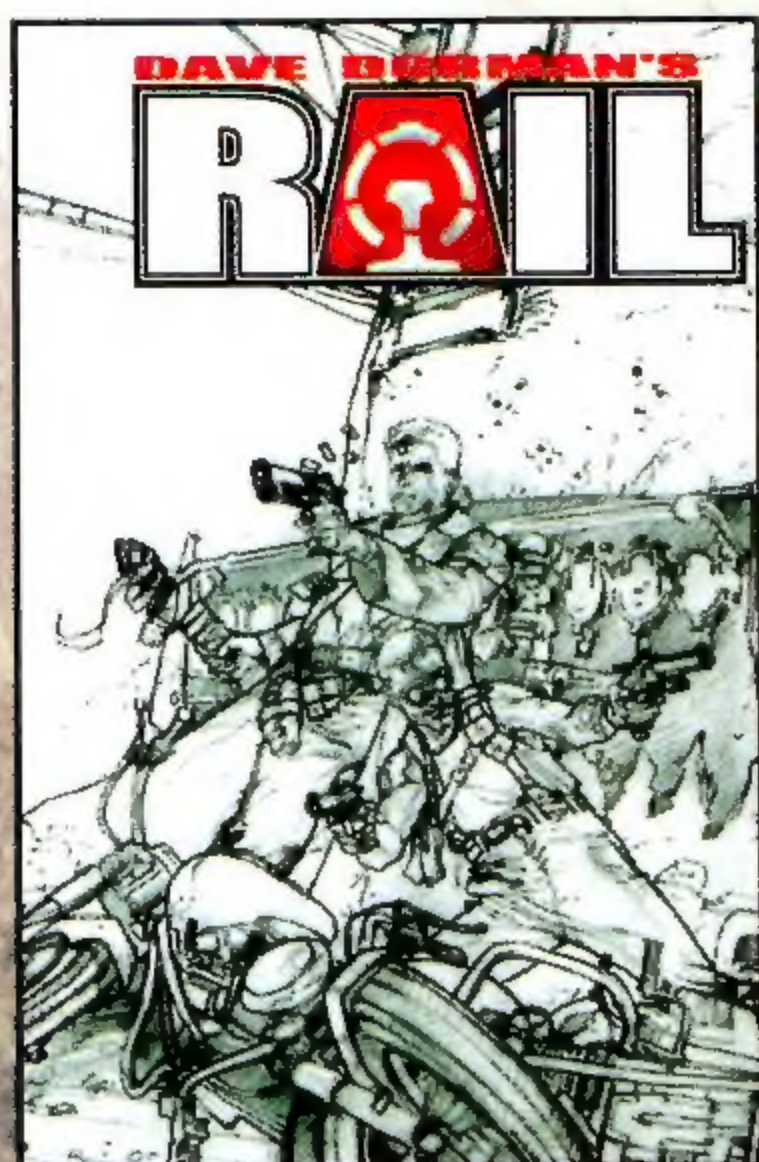


example D



example C

Once I am happy with the placement of the elements and look of the final composition, then I lay another piece of tracing paper over the rough and refine the drawing, filling in all the fine details (example D). This gives me a finished pencil piece that will be the basis/reference of the final painting.



example E

When I had finished the pencil drawing I was looking at it and something just didn't seem quite right. I decided to scan it into the computer and mock-up a cover to see if that might help me figure out what was wrong (example E). Well in looking at it then, it was obvious to me what the problem with it was: the figures were facing the spine of the book, rather than the opening. While this may not be a big deal if the painting was a stand-alone piece and not intended for publication, as a cover it needed to draw the reader into the book. So I decided to flip the whole piece and have the action facing right. After making another mock-up of the cover (example F), I felt this was a much better composition.



example F



example G

I first lay down some general tones to get a feel of where I'm going visually, and this also helps develop contrasts for the elements in the piece (example G).



example I

So I flipped the drawing, and proceed to start the painting. I paint on #100 Crescent illustration board that has a coat of gesso on it. I use the gesso in certain areas on the board to create textures, so that when the paint is applied to the board the texture will show through and add an extra dimension to the work. After the gesso dries I make a photocopy of the final pencil drawing and transfer the image, using graphite paper, to my gessoed board. I then spray fix the pencil, and I am ready to paint.



example H

I let that dry and then I come back and work the background a bit more, adding some more details (example H). Once again I set this aside to dry.

At this point a lot of the background is in (example I) so I start working on the main images in the piece, which are the figures.

As with the background, I block in the colors and contrasts and work them into the background (example J). I let this dry and I come back and begin working on the details (example K). This is really where the fun starts for me, because the painting starts to come alive with the addition of the figures in action.



example K

As I continue to paint, it becomes a process of just refining the details and playing with the paint and textures to tie everything together visually (example L). And as I get closer to finishing, I have to keep myself from putting too much detail in. I want the viewer's eye to travel a certain way in the painting, and if I put too much detail here or there, then I will make the viewer stop in areas that weren't intended.



example L



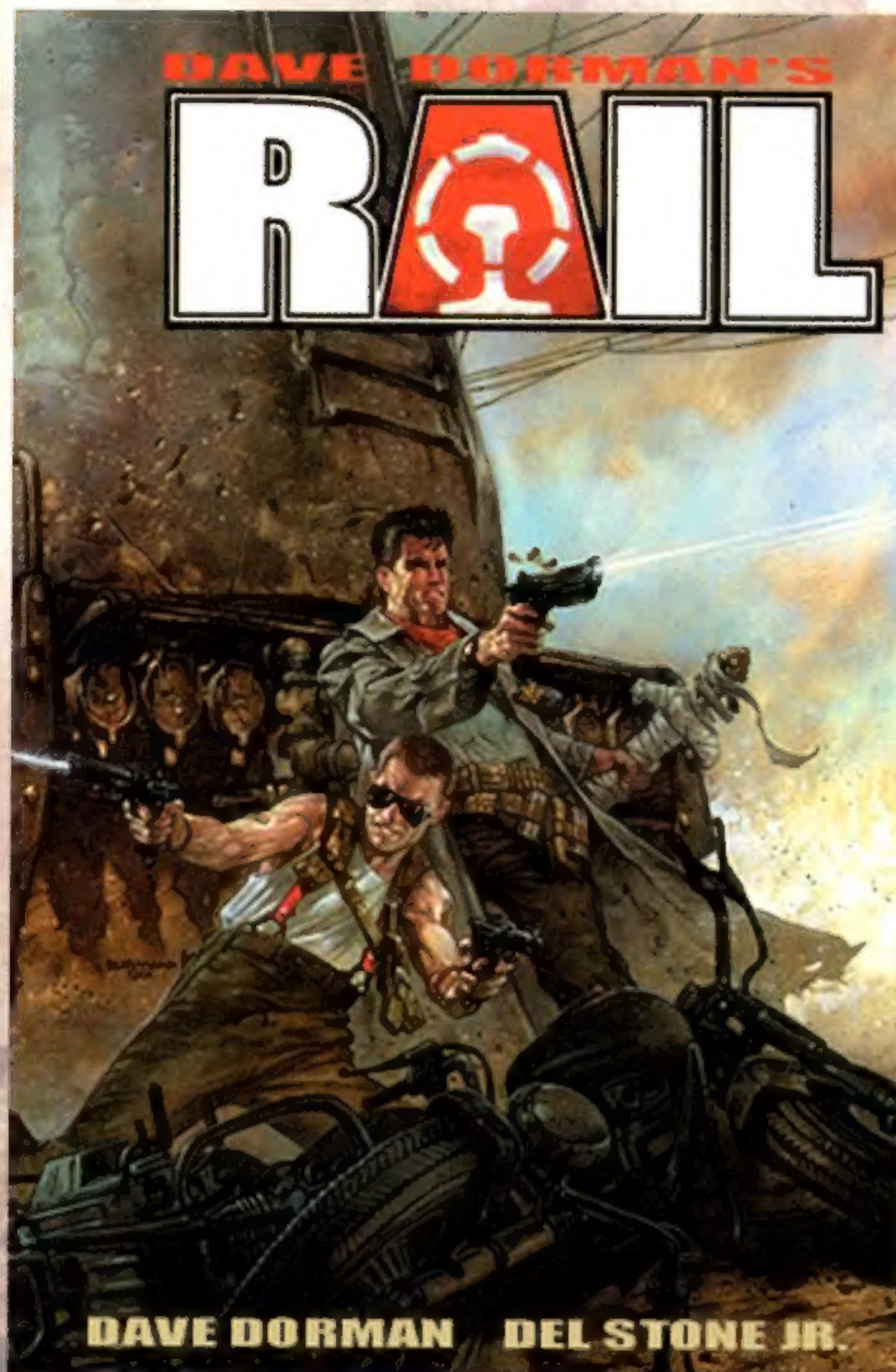
example M

HOWEVER!!...After talking with the publisher and finding that they wanted a slightly different look for their marketing of the book, we decided not to use this art as the cover. The final art used was more indicative of a hardback novel style piece, which is what they felt worked better for their marketing. Now even though this is my creator owned project and I could put whatever I wanted on the cover, I am still a professional and I know the business that I'm in. I could have insisted on using this art for the cover, but they had very persuasive arguments that I did not disagree with. That other piece, while not as action oriented, still has a great flavor of what I am trying to put across in the story.

For more information about the forth coming DAVE DORMAN'S RAIL comic from Image Comics see WWW.DORMANART.COM or WWW.WASTEDLANDS.COM.

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So here we have, after about 6-7 days of work, a finished painting (example M). I'm very happy with the piece and I feel it captures what I had intended, the action and drama of the story. I decide as an afterthought to do a quick mock-up of the art as the proposed cover (example N). Once again this works very well for me.



example N

DAVE DORMAN

STAR WARS® TO WASTED LANDS®

by Flint Henry



"Amazing! Incredible! Beautiful!" Whether one of many that have come to recognize the smooth, wonderfully-realized signature style on Star Wars artwork, or someone that has been mesmerized into following this eye-catching artist's career over star-spanning vistas far beyond Vader, you've encountered endless positive adjectives when it comes to the wonderful work of Mr. David Dorman. They're all accurate.

With a tremendous twenty-year output in a commercial field wherein many creators burn out or are deemed dated, Dave is continually in demand – and he's just getting started! He's a true master of his craft, whose imagery has thrilled and enchanted almost everyone somehow and somewhere with his prolific and pleasing output. From exciting, inspiring production art (some of this editor's favorite Dorman material; sadly, rarely seen) for the trend-setting '80's line of Hasbro's G.I. Joe toys to his Eisner Award winning Aliens:Tribes book, to a vast variety of calendars and cards, games, models and more from numerous companies, his illustrations are everywhere – not to mention his many prints and posters, adorning the domiciles of Dorman Devotees the world over. Now his new, creator-owned graphic novel –Rail – has comic fans anxiously waiting to see a rare Dorman foray into sequential storytelling.

For as disciplined and prodigious as the demands of his output and his field are, Dave is eminently approachable, modest, and friendly. If you know Dave only through his work, if you have the pleasure of meeting him at one of his appearances you'll find him just as enjoyable as his art – now, if he just didn't make all that awesome work seem so darned easy!

Sketch: Dave, it's great to speak with you. Rail looks just incredible and I'm anxious to talk to you about it, but first can you tell Sketch a little about how you got started? How did you go about deciding to become an illustrator? Was it a long time ago, in a studio far, far away?

Dave Dorman: My interest in artwork started when I was a kid, ... oh, six or seven years old, I guess, is when I can remember picking up my first comic... and that would have been in the mid '60's. Definitely Marvel. Spider-Man, Fantastic Four, that kind of thing...and some pretty cool looking pictures there! And that's what pulled me into comics, was looking at that cool artwork. For years and years I didn't read the comics, I just looked at the pictures... and sat down, and had my pencil and a piece of paper and just started tracing, trying to figure out how they did those cool drawings. At that time, that's how I learned to draw for the most part, which eventually led me into painting...and with my interest in comics, and

naturally, science fiction... led me into this field.

Sketch: Wow, you're self-taught? Did you ever take any kind of formal course – high school, anything?

Dave: Well, I sort of learned drawing myself up until high school. And when I was in high school, it came to a point... as with life, you have to make a decision on what you want to do, and I really hadn't yet made any real decision on what I wanted to do with my life. I knew that I enjoyed art, and painting. I had been painting for probably...oh, two or three years by the time I was a senior in high school.

Sketch: And that was painting for just yourself, Dave?

Dave: Yeah, just learning how to paint...and, basically, I taught myself how to paint, just like I taught myself how to draw. I started copying Frank Frazetta stuff. I'd just put the paint onto my palette and get a Frank Frazetta Conan the Barbarian book and hold it up, and just try and reproduce it.

Sketch: That's great, you don't hear the wildly successful "self taught" tale too often these days –hmm, Steranko comes to mind as well, he often mentions he was self-taught when it comes to painting. I just find a person of your talent being self-taught incredible, that's a wonderful thing.

Dave: Yeah, that's how I taught myself the basic techniques. And when I was able to combine that with my own drawings, I was able to do my own paintings...though obviously they were very, very weak compared to the master I was trying to learn under. But it was a good way to start. So when I was a senior in high school I made that decision that I wanted to follow art as a career. And then through the graciousness of my parent's hearts and support, they said that that was okay. They could see my passion and my enthusiasm for the art... being at home and drawing and painting all the time. They could see that I was very interested in that. So they supported me through one year of college, a liberal arts college

in Maryland. And at that time they were only teaching modern art – you know; gallery painting, abstract art. Modern stuff, and I didn't really want to learn that. I wanted to learn illustration. So after one year there, even though I learned some things, it wasn't in the direction that I wanted to go.

I left that school, and then in 1978 I went to the Joe Kubert School up in New Jersey. At that time it was only a two-year curriculum and it was only black and white artwork, graphics and comic illustration that they were teaching. It's very different now, with computer animation and computer color work and full painting curriculum. But back then it was only the second year that the school was open, so they were just teaching strictly black and white artwork. I had thought that I had wanted to get into comics a little bit more vigorously at the time. And during that year that I was at the Kubert school I found out that comics wasn't really for me because – it wasn't the drawing part of it, the drawing part of it I really enjoyed – it was the



patience that it took to do continuous panel work... meaning four, five, six panels per page, every page, throughout a 22 or 24 page or however long book. I found that I was putting more energy into a single panel, and by the time I got halfway through the page I was mentally spent. I was dwelling too much on the single image. And that's pretty much where I made the decision to move into painting, because painting allowed me to focus on the single image. So in talking with my teachers and with Joe at the school, we all agreed that the school wasn't really giving me what I wanted to learn. They knew that I was interested in painting, and they

could see that my focus was on single pieces, and so they encouraged me to follow my own path, which is what I was really doing anyway.

Sketch: I see. Hmm, and a number of big landmark decisions there...

Dave: Yeah. I did learn quite a lot at the school, but once again, it wasn't really the direction I wanted to go. And so, once again, it fell back to the goodness of my parent's hearts and them allowing me to live at home after that, and take some part time jobs, and bring in some money, and do some work. But also

allowing me to continue my own education, my own way, at home. So for a couple of years after the Kubert school I worked part time, could come home, and could just sit in my bedroom – which I had a little studio up in the corner – and I would just be teaching myself how to paint and how to draw better. Over the course of time, I got better...and, you know, eventually, I made my first sale...and that opened the door for the second sale, and that opened the door for the third one, and it just snowballed from there. I started making my living as a freelance illustrator soon after.

Sketch: Wow, I wasn't familiar with that aspect of your background. All that polish, and control and technique – who would guess that it's self-taught? That's a very inspiring story.

Dave: I think that a lot of what I do comes as a benefit of being self-taught. I didn't have anyone really looking over my shoulder saying, "you can't do this", or "you can't do that", or that you have to do something in one particular way to achieve a certain thing. It was real trial and error, and I was just teaching myself my way, rather than being taught someone else's way...by someone else.

Sketch: Have you maintained that approach over time? Do you continue to follow the "Dorman Technique," or...

Dave: I'm still learning. And I fully understand that, as an artist, it's constantly a learning process. I feel that any artist who says they know all they need to know about artwork, and cannot or doesn't need to learn anymore, is an artist that's going to fail, because the world is always changing and there's always new things coming up. Whether it be new artists, or whether it be new technology, or whether it just be new images that your eye has never seen before... in the world there's always something new. So as an artist I know that I'm going to be continually growing, and I'm trying to keep that growth very much tied into, specifically, my artwork, so with every piece I'm learning something new.

But also, with being in an industry where there's so many varied types of artists doing so many different techniques now, as opposed to 20 years ago, when there were almost no painters in the industry, I sort of came in right at the beginning when the door was being opened for painters. Now there's just a flurry of wonderful guys out there, and I'm picking up little bits of other techniques here and there from talking to other artists.

Because I paint primarily in oils, and I've taught myself, I'm very, very flexible in the look of the oils – I can make it look like acrylics, or watercolor, or gouache or any other type of medium, because I've taught myself how to do that. And that's from looking at other artwork and not knowing how that artwork's done, adapting it to the oils that I paint in. So over the years...the past six or seven years, especially...I've been learning new mediums. I've been painting in acrylics, I've been painting in gouache and various other mediums, because I've become interested in broadening my horizons beyond oil painting. And oil is not a very common painting medium that illustrators use. Most illustrators tend to use

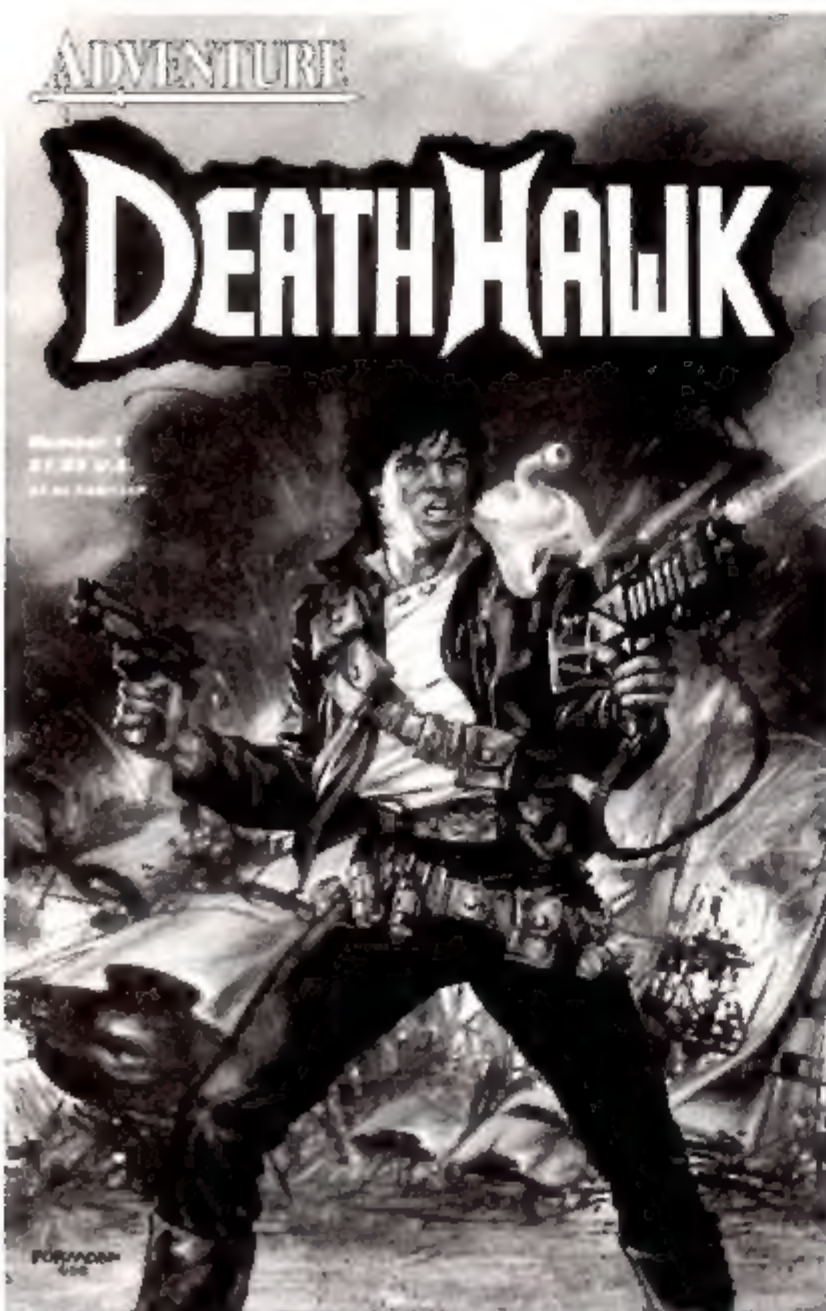
water mediums like acrylics or watercolor. So when I'm talking to these other artists they're talking water mediums while I'm painting in oils, but I'm still interested because I can look at that work and I can say "wow, that's very cool. You know, maybe I can adapt a little of that into what I'm doing." And that's a learning process, that's taking something that's out there and saying, "I'd like to try that sometime."

And so I'm constantly learning, and I'm constantly being exposed to a flurry of wonderful artists in this business, and I'm constantly learning from the history of art. There are just thousands of years of wonderful artwork out there, that, if you take the time to look, you can learn a whole lot from as well. So it's not just the peers in my industry that I'm learning from, it's everything in general.

Sketch: Dave, may I ask if you had - beyond Frazetta, already mentioned – any creators you might have found influential or inspirational during your formative time, commercial or classical?

Dave: Sure, well, in teaching myself within the industry, Frank Frazetta, whom I spoke of. There was Michael Whelan, and Boris Vallejo, they were very big in the late '70's and early '80's. They're still very big in the industry, but they were breaking out at that time and were very visible to a guy like me. From there...well, I was still reading a lot of comics at that time, so there was Neal Adams, Barry Smith...Jim Steranko...and a lot of the workhorses like John Buscema, and John Romita Sr., and Jack Kirby...all these guys were definitely an influence on me even though I wasn't pursuing continuous panel work. I could still learn a lot from looking at their panels and seeing how they were structured, the composition, and how they were doing the drawing and such, so the comic books were still very much an influence.

Now as far as the painting goes, there was a lot of real fun stuff happening in the mid to late '70's in the science fiction field, which is where I started



to learn to paint. But then, in reading up on Frazetta and some of these guys' influences in that generation I started to learn more about the generation prior to that, which was like Norman Rockwell's generation. Painters from the early '20's and '30's, and the pulp era, and so I started to investigate guys like Dean Cornwell and NC Wyeth and Howard Pyle, and all these types of painters who influenced the painters that I originally learned from. And then, once I started investigating all those guys, the whole world of artwork just opened up. Once you start looking at what's been done, you're just amazed.

But I was looking at very specific types of artwork, more illustration artwork as opposed to the Degas or a Monet or the classic guys, because that particular style was not something I was interested in following. I was interested in the illustration styles. But that certainly didn't negate the fact that all these classic guys like Renoir and Degas and Monet couldn't teach me something through their art. Certainly once I became more educated in artwork and had spent more time painting I was able to look at their work with a new eye, and understand what they were trying to achieve. And so that was a learning experience as well...it all sort of rolls together, sort of meshes. You know, you learn something here, that when you look at something over there, you say, "wow, that's interesting, I can see why he's doing that." Then, what you've learned there, it can leapfrog over to something else that you've never had a connection with, and you're, "Oh, I see what he was doing here." It's just a constant learning thing, and it's a just wonder...to look at the stuff, and see it, and...it's just very thrilling, I don't think I'll ever tire of doing this.

Sketch: *That's a very nice outlook in these oft-cynical times. I may be jumping the gun here, but as you're one of the famous traditional painters in the field, how do you view the encroachment of computers into things?*

Dave: Well, within what I

do, I don't use computers other than to scan the final work in and make electronic files. But with the generation of artists that's coming up right now well, the computer's a tool. And I see it as a tool, just like a pencil, or a paintbrush, or a palette and canvas... and that's all it is to me. It's the artist who sits down at the keyboard and the mouse and the stylus, who sits down to create the art, that is the artist. The computer is not the artist. The computer is a tool; it's an inanimate thing that, once it's picked up by an artist, can render a piece of artwork.

Now unfortunately, because the images that computers can make can be done very quickly and very flashy, the public is being misled by the quality of the artwork that's being produced. Because artists are not producing artwork in the computer field in general, technicians are producing artwork. And that, I think, is sad...it's just the way the technology has come forward so fast. Of all the artists that are producing computer-generated work, I would say that probably twenty-five percent of them are actually artists, the rest are not...they're manipulators. And that's sort of depressing, because that seventy-five percent of those artist/slash manipulators are taking work away from traditional artists because they are, quote, "computer artists," and that's what a lot of companies are looking for now. They want to see artwork done on the computer. Which there's no difference, really, between that and artwork done in a traditional fashion that's scanned in. It's the lure of modern technology that's sort of blinding some art directors, and some young guys, who think that the computer is the be-all and end-all of creating artwork. It's making things a little tough for traditionalists. Hopefully, it's going to come back around where the artist is the one who is going to be looked at, rather than if a piece was done on a computer, or if it was done in a traditional wet paint style.

Sketch: *It's certainly an interesting time right now for*

computers in comics..

Dave: You know, the technology has made it fairly easy for anybody, pretty much, to produce their own book. From pencil drawings to inking...you can even ink in the computer, you can color in the computer, you can do the whole thing, and you can have it finished. Not even camera-ready, because printers are printing from disk. You don't have to deliver your artwork camera-ready to a printer anymore, and then they make the films and strip it in and make plates. You just take their disc down to the printer and say, "print my book," and the printer says "okay." So it's making it a lot easier, but unfortunately making it easier doesn't necessarily make the quality better.

Sketch: *I would take it that you don't have more than perhaps a superficial interest in replacing your Windsor-Newton with PhotoShop at the moment, Dave?*

Dave: You know, it's not a matter of not having the desire to do that - I would like to learn how to do that - but I don't have the time, at least right now, to learn a totally new medium. A new tool.

Sketch: *I don't mean this in an inflammatory sense, but do you feel at all - threatened, by any means?*

Dave: There's a threat there - like I said earlier, you have a lot of guys who have no artistic ability being able to get on the computer and manipulate images that sort of...look nice to the untrained eye.

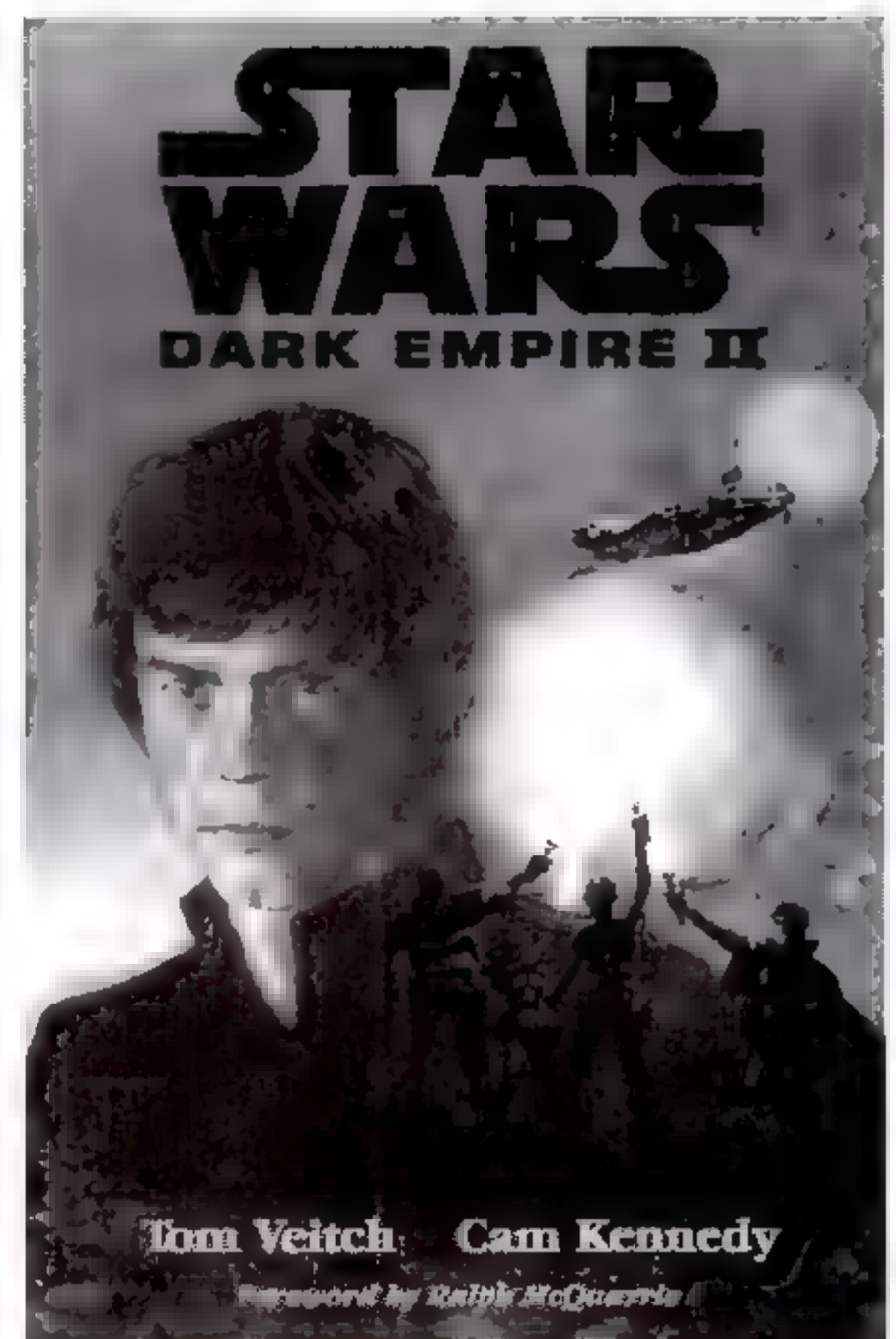
Sketch: *Well, they're certainly taking a chisel point to a part of the market...*

Dave: Well yeah, and that's a threat to any artist who is worth their beans - whenever a group of people can come in, with no

education or expertise, and start taking jobs away from people who have spent their life learning a certain thing - that's a threat. And the technology of the computer is allowing that certain percentage of people to come in and take jobs away from us. And there's nothing we can do about it - you can try to educate art directors or people of power that are hiring artists that sure, it may look slick - but where's the content? But many of these guys are of this generation themselves, so they're blinded by the slickness.

Sketch: *The taste and trend go hand-in-hand.*

Dave: There's nothing wrong with the computer as a tool, and I would like to learn it as tool, I just do not have the





time right now. Maybe in the future I will have the time, but I don't want to just jump into it and try it for a couple days and see where it goes; if I'm going to learn it I'm going to learn to do it right. It's the same thing with airbrush, like ten years ago everybody was saying you had to learn how to use an airbrush. I felt yeah, well, that would be nice, but if I'm going to learn to use it, I'm going to learn to use it right – and I just didn't have time for that then, because you can't learn it in a day... it takes time.

Sketch: Speaking of time, and tastes, and trends, I must ask – why come back to comics



right now, Dave, in such a particularly unpleasant market?

Dave: Well, it just seemed like the right time for me. The project that I'm working on – Rail – that's part of "The Wasted Lands", which is sort of an umbrella name for the creation of this universe that I did. And the Rail graphic novel is basically something that I've wanted to do for a long time, just because I have a love of the medium. It's taken this long to do because of various things both personal and professional that I won't go into right now. But just in the past six months,

probably the past year, I guess, because I made this decision last summer, the time was right for me to do it. I felt artistically comfortable, I felt an urge to do this, because if I waited any longer... well you know? The clock doesn't tick backward, it just ticks forward, and I'm getting older (laughter), and if I just kept putting it off and putting it off it was never going to get done. I wanted to make my little contribution to the comic book mythology. I'm not saying this is any great thing – it may just make a little blip on the screen and then disappear, but it's my contribution. It's my project, it's creator-owned, I created this thing from the ground up, and it's just my...urge...to contribute to the medium that got me interested in artwork, and got me to where I am today.

Sketch: That's really very nice, and believe me, we're all really glad you have that "urge", because we're certainly looking forward to it!

Dave: And as far as the market goes? I'm not doing it to make money, really. Sure, it would be nice to make a wheelbarrow full of dough on the thing, but I'm not doing it for anything other than for my creative satisfaction of doing a graphic novel. I wish the market was better

because I might be able to make a wheelbarrow full of money, but I know that the market has become depressed over the last couple of years. But the market does not sway my artistic passions, my heart and my mind sway that – and they said, "do it now!" And that's why I made the jump into this project. I was ready for it.

Sketch: Now, tell us more about this project. Your heart and mind told you to jump into it, now what told you to go with this particular genre, Dave? What said "Wasted Lands"?

Dave: "The Wasted Lands" started out as just the creation of a couple of single characters here and there. Just designing them in the studio, and making some sketches, coming up with some goofy little backgrounds, and eventually I thought it might be interesting to tie it all together. Then in 1993 or '94, Skybox created a computer game that they hired five artists to contribute to. It was me, Brian Stelfreeze, Brom, Julie Bell, and Dave McKean. And we all contributed about twenty-five paintings. And each artist was given a world to create within this game, and they could do whatever they wanted. Then Skybox would tie it all in to this computer game and they would do collector's cards that would go along with the game. The game flopped, unfortunately, due to a variety of things, but the artwork was really nice through the whole group.

What I did was take all these little characters I had that were just sort of bouncing around, and that's where it sort of gelled into creating The Wasted Lands. Coming up with the threads that would tie all these characters together, and some underlying story threads. That was the real genesis of The Wasted Lands in general.

I had this other, secondary story line that I had come up with years before that I just hadn't done anything with. Sort of this Arthurian legend thing going on that just didn't fit in anywhere. So after this Skybox game came out and went, and "Skyborg" was the name of the game, I still had my characters. I eventually pulled some other story

material together and produced some short material for various publications. I did, I think, a ten page story for A1 when it was published by Epic comics in the mid '90's, a 6 pager vignette for Heavy Metal, and then I did a fifteen page story for Penthouse Comix featuring some of the characters as well. And I know you'll say, "Oh, Penthouse Comix, wasn't that one of those sex stories?" Well, no, my agreement with them was that there was some topless material, but it wasn't a sex story, it was a science fiction-adventure story...with some topless girls in there!

Sketch: By the way, Dave, I must tell you that I was very offended by your Penthouse story. Offended that there wasn't more of the ol' hotsy-totsy stuff by you in there! I wrote in a number of complaint letters – just so you know: "Mr. Dorman is too classy. I would like to see more. .etc."

Dave: Well, there might have been a follow-up, that was actually the first of a four-part story –

Sketch: (interrupts) "I don't like Mr. Dorman taking the high road. What's Dave Dorman doing in this magazine, anyhow?"

Dave: Well, they said that in the next story they wanted more explicit sex, and I said "no," that's not what I'm doing the work for. And so I pulled out of contributing any more material for them.

Sketch: Interesting, as I understand Penthouse Comix was paying a very healthy page rate at that time – as you've stated, money isn't the deciding factor for you when it comes to your product?

Dave: Correct. But that kind of material was not my intent, otherwise I'd have said, "okay, I'll do the next episode." But I wanted to do my project under my terms.

Sketch: What attracted you to this kind of post-apocalyptic/post-nuke type of thing? You've mentioned Rail has some Arthurian elements, but why this subject as opposed to a more

conventional superhero book? Or a crime or noir type project?

Dave: Well, you know, it's all a matter of what I have an interest in, and the only thing that *Wasted Land* doesn't have is costumed superheroes. I mean, there's guys who wear interesting get-ups, but I didn't want to do anything superheroic because I don't think my style of artwork lends itself towards the superhero. It tends to lend itself more towards a realistic look. And that's on purpose. That's the way I want to paint. Now I have done a lot of superhero artwork in the past and that's been fun, but for my own characters I like to keep it a little bit more realistic. The *Wasted Land* project is dealing with a lot of elements that I find interesting in the types of books that I read, and the types of movies and TV that I watch, and just my interests in a lot of different things. So throughout the story, of which *Rail* is the opening chapter of, we'll get into things like *Rail* being more of a motorcycle western. A Sergio Leone style story. It's not necessarily post-apocalyptic... I would say it's more post-industrial.

Sketch: Sorry, I didn't mean to mislabel.

Dave: (Laughter) That's quite all right. But it's not Mad-Maxish, which most people think when I say, "like a motorcycle western". They see some of the artwork without looking at the context, and they think, "oh, it's like *Mad Max*," but it's not. This deals with a society that's well entrenched. It's not broken down per se. It's been taken advantage of by the men that are in power, and they've let things wear down because they want to put the money in their pockets, rather than upgrade things. It's sort of...if you have to use the term "apocalypse," I would say it's an industrial apocalypse, rather than like a war-type apocalypse.

Sketch: I don't want to use the wrong term again, but is this perhaps, intended to be viewed as personal commentary? Or satire? Or is this just fun adventure-type stuff?

Dave: It's more fun, adventure kind of stuff. But there is some commentary in there, kind of buried underneath some layers of things. The surface elements range from westerns and science fiction and fantasy to Arthurian things, to zombie movies, to beach and surfing movies. (I have a surfing story that's just wacky! I'm really hoping to get to that one at some point.) And it deals with visual material from Sergio Leone westerns to *Blade Runner*... to *Dark City*, to *Seven* to *Excalibur*...and just everything in between. I'm just incorporating a lot of the fun stuff that I like and putting it in there. And then I'm maybe making a little bit of social commentary about certain things that mean something to me.

If the reader doesn't get that, if they're just reading it as a surface thing, that's fine too, and that's the purpose of it. I want the reader to read the book, look at some cool artwork, and come away from it feeling that their money was well spent on the book. If you read beyond that into some of the layers of some of the things I'm trying to say about people's disillusionment, and redemption... about how they pull themselves up and face the real world and deal with the oppression that others put upon them, well, that's fine too. But that's not the purpose of it. The purpose of it is to tell a fun story, and to have given people their money's worth when they have closed the book.

Sketch: You just mentioned a slew of very cool movies, are you a big moviegoer?

Dave: Oh absolutely. I've been a big moviegoer since before I could draw.

Sketch: You also mentioned a number of different genres – surf movies, that's one you don't hear too often?

Dave: That's just what I like! I surfed when I was a kid and I really enjoyed it. So that's part of my culture when growing up, and I wanted to incorporate it into what I'm doing.

Sketch: Surf movies – now I'm excited – any other wild, poppy elements? *Annette Funicello*, *Big Daddy Roth*? *Baron Von Zipper*, *Dave*? *Baron Von Zipper*?!

Dave: (Laughter) Well, there are motorcycles in this story...

Sketch: How does your approach to a comics page differ from your poster/painting type of work?

Dave: It's definitely a different mind set because you're not thinking of a single image when you're doing the work. The work inherently is a group of images. So not only do I have to think of what I'm drawing at the moment, I have to think of what the previous drawings were, and what the future drawings are going to be, and see how they work visually to tell the story. I can tell a story in a single image, but to tell that story in multiple images is definitely much harder. I'm having to shift gears mentally to do that, and for someone who's painted single images almost exclusively for about twenty years, it's a little hard.

It's not like I haven't been looking at comics for twenty years. I read comics to this day. And a lot of my good friends are in comics and I look at what they do, and I'm amazed by what they do. But it's very different in looking at it as opposed to actually creating the pages. So it's been a big shift in gears, it's been very tough. I'm obviously not saying that this is the easiest thing I've ever done...I would have to say this pretty much ranks with some of the hardest stuff that I've ever done, because it's just inherently different from what I've taught myself to do.

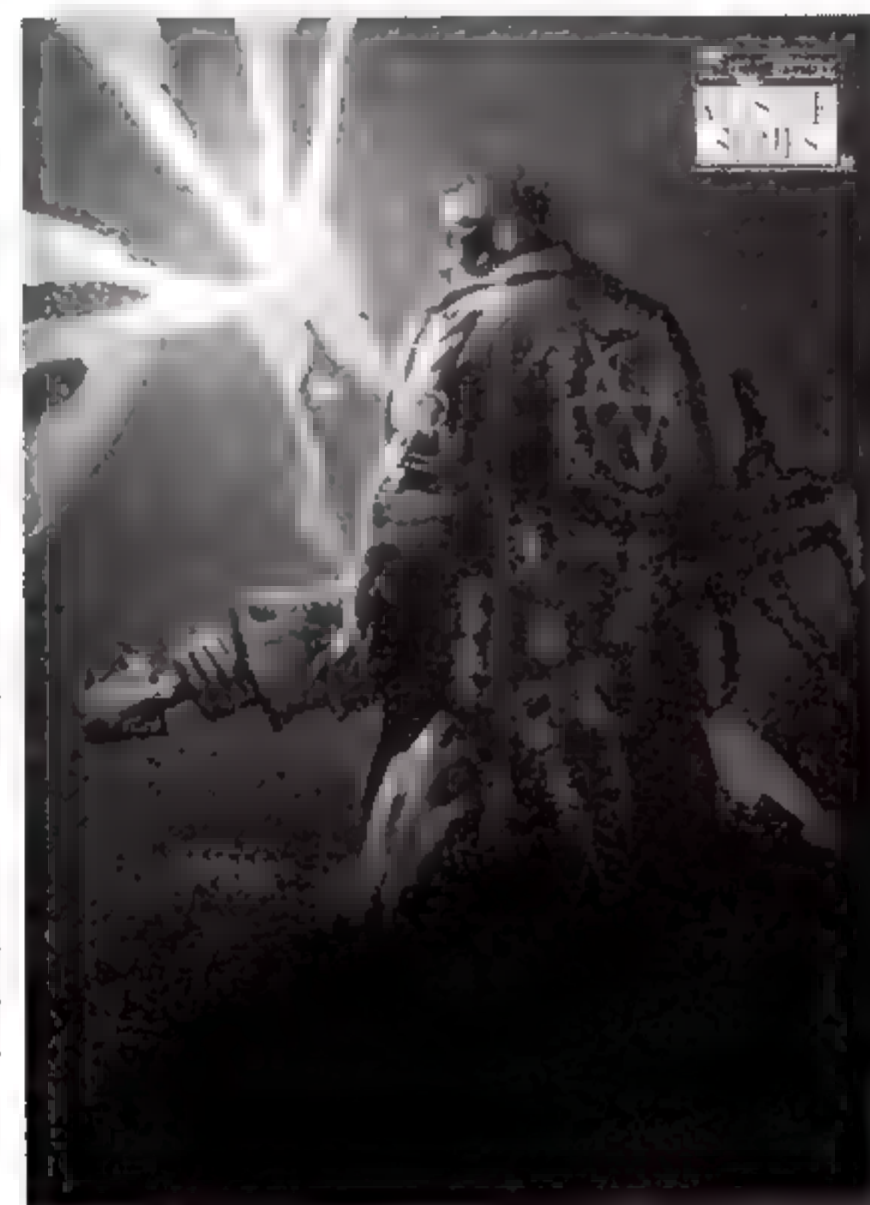
Sketch: But it sounds as though you're really enjoying it? It certainly sounds like your heart is very much into it?



Dave: I'm doing it on my own time, and within my own deadlines, and there's no pressure other than what I'm putting on myself to do. So, the onus is on me to produce it the way I want to. It's not being done for anyone else but me. And yes I am enjoying it tremendously.

Sketch: It must be very gratifying for you in that respect?

Dave: Well, it is very gratifying. You know, I've had offers from other publishers to do continuous panel stuff. But I've worked for so long, for almost my whole career, in doing other people's properties. And I knew that if I was going to take a large amount of continuous panel stuff, not just five or ten pages, but a whole book of twenty-four (or in this case, a graphic novel with forty-eight pages) and put that much energy and





Penciled page from Dave Dorman's RAIL.

that much work into it, I wanted it to be my own, not someone else's.

Sketch: That's great. You just mentioned you've painted commercially for twenty years, what a terrific body of work! Sketch readers will certainly have plenty of Dorman favorites coming to mind beyond just Star Wars, and there are so many older Dorman gems that people that are familiar only with Star Wars would enjoy. There was a really cool future S.W.A.T. - type piece for Now comics, on a Chuck Dixon book. Aliens: Tribes, with Steve Bissette - I remember stuff you were doing for Sal Quartuccio - one of my all-time Dorman favorites is that incredible Judge Dredd piece you did for Sal, "Metal Fatigue."

Dave: Yeah, that one's hanging in my living room.

Sketch: Waugh, what an amazing piece! Now, do you use models for your stuff to any extent, or is it just - bammo - it's in the Dorman brain?!

Dave: Well, I do use models. One of the things I strive for is a realism in the look of what I'm doing. Even though it's science fiction type work, I want it to look real within the context of that work.

Sketch: I think that is just an amazing piece. You were able to

bring such a realism to this outlandish sci-fi character that's usually done in a really over-the-top, in-your-face fashion. Your version made Dredd look like he would just swing his gun right off the image at you, and it would be the most natural thing in the world... you made that character so darn realistic and yet impactful, it just sticks in my head. And you really made it your "own", no easy feat when working with a character like Dredd - or Batman - characters that

have been done by such a large body of other artists.

Dave: It's a bit over the top, but still works within a basic realm of reality. I want viewers to look at my stuff and feel and say, "Wow! That could really be." And so, to achieve that, I do use photographic reference, and I have people come over and pose for me. From there I build this science fiction and fantasy world on top of the real world.

Sketch: Do you do a lot of extensive staging or lighting and things, Dave? Cloth and draping and...

Dave: No, no, I just have a couple of floodlights up in the studio, and I have the studio lights and the windows, so it's not a matter of setting up anything really elaborate. It's just giving me enough to look at things that your eye sees, but your mind does not retain. Life has such minute detail to it that your brain cannot hold all that detail, so the photographs are basically used as a helper to remind you of certain details. The way a wrinkle folds or the way that light hits a face, the certain planes of that face causing certain shadows. Those are the little things that make the picture more realistic. I mean, I could draw something out of my head, and make it look real to... a point. But I couldn't paint something out of

my head and make it as real as if I would having my photo reference with me to use as a sort of crutch, to make it more real.

Sketch: Impressive, especially considering how that Dredd weapon looks - all your stuff looks so darn real, no matter how wild the setting.

Dave: It's a matter of knowing how to build things visually, and render them to make them look realistic. To do that, you need to know what things look like...obviously, the Dredd gun is not a real gun...but I've drawn lots of real guns, and I have lots of gun reference, so I know how things look. So when I'm doing my drawings, I just draw it how I think it's going to look. Because I have this photo reference of these other guns and stuff lying around I can look at that and say, "okay, here's the way that light bounces off it, and here's the way the shadow goes, and here's the way the etching lays on it," or whatever. That's just one of the small things that I use to make the paintings more realistic.

Sketch: And your familiarity, and the Dorman Brain, just fills the rest in...

Dave: That's right. It's a matter of learning how to do things, and the more you draw, and the more you paint, the more you'll learn. And that will make the piece look better. I mean, fifteen years ago I wasn't able to paint as realistically as I am now, because I have fifteen more years of experience. So...you do something, and you learn to do it...and you do it better, and then you do it even better (laughter)!

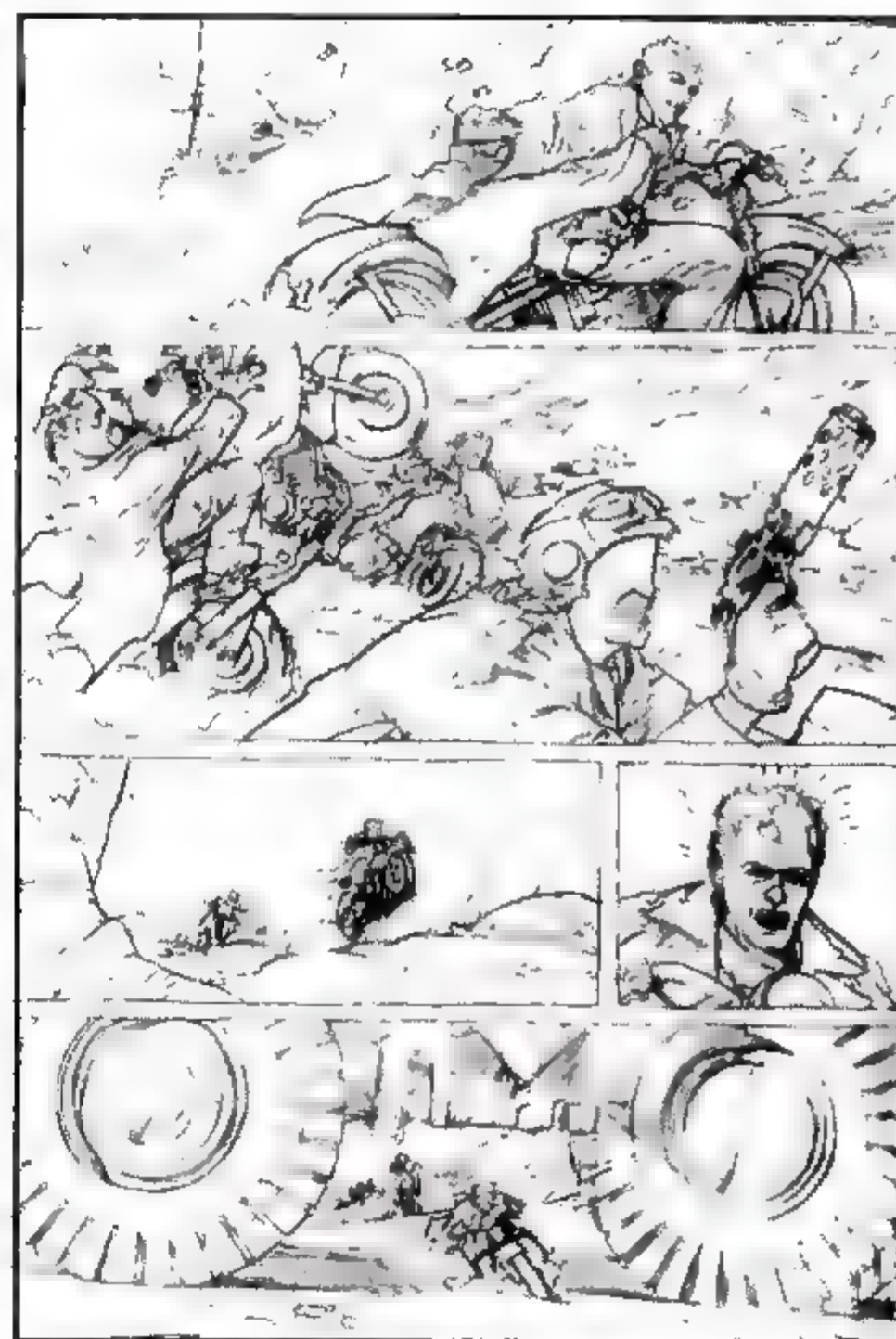
Sketch: Now you have this great body of work...you've been in this business twenty

years. That can be viewed as a heck of a landmark these days...

Dave: I've been very lucky to have been involved in a lot of fun projects: the Aliens and the Predators stuff with Dark Horse and Fox, Indiana Jones, and Star Wars, and the other projects I've been involved in with Lucasfilm, they've been very, very fun. The Batman stuff that I've done I've been real excited about, since Batman is one of my favorite characters. I'd like to do my Batman graphic novel, and once I'm done with Rail perhaps I'll pursue that with DC again. I had some fun doing a bunch of Marvel trading cards and a couple of things a few years back with them, and I'd like to do some more stuff. What I've done in the past has been a great deal of fun, and I've been very privileged to be involved with that material, and I hope that's just a groundwork of things to come! I'm still young... sort of (laughter)! And I don't anticipate ever stopping as long as I'm enjoying what I'm doing, and I can't see not enjoying it. This is just opening the door to other things that I hope to be involved in.

See more of Daves artwork at www.dormanart.com www.wasterlands.com

All characters are copyright and trademarked their respected owners.



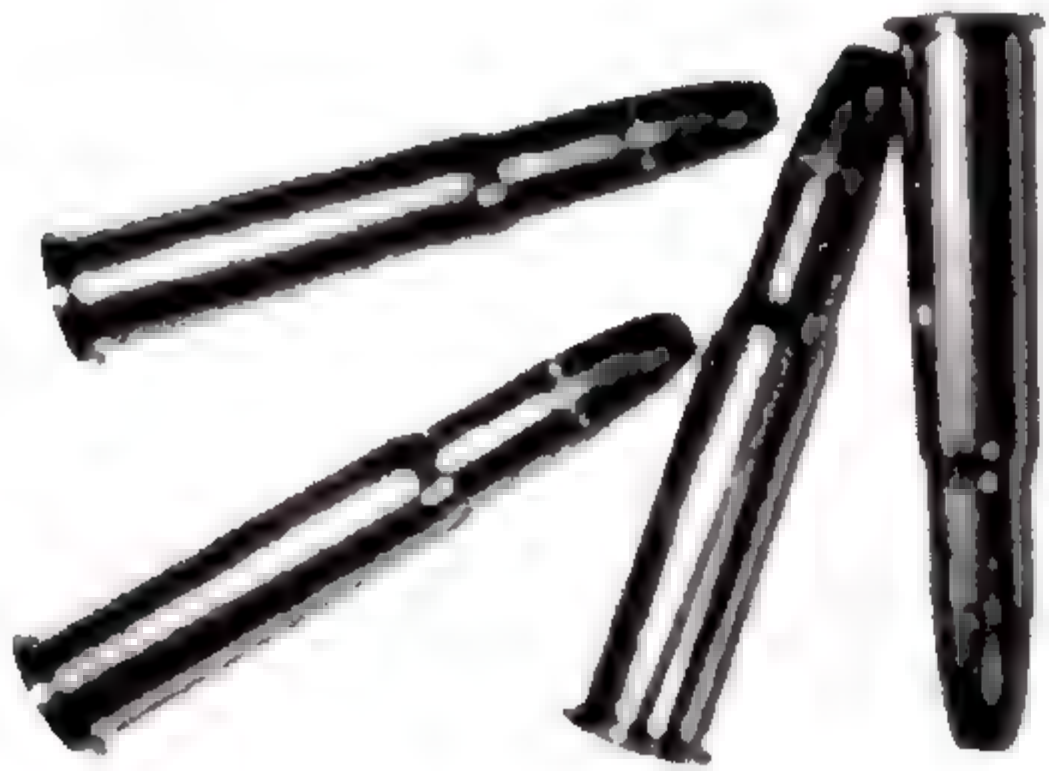
Penciled page from Dave Dorman's RAIL.



By Beau Smith

From The Ranch

CHECKIN' REFERENCES



Do it right or don't do it at all.

My dad used to tell me and my brothers that on more than one occasion. It's one of those things that stuck in our collective IQ's of 12.

I found as a writer that checking references could not only help out the artist, put more character into the characters, but it could also be fun. I've always been one of these guys when watching a TV show, a movie, reading a book or most importantly...reading a comic book...that checked to make sure the items used in the story were right. They had to look correct and work in the proper manner. My time at Eclipse Comics under the watchful editorial eye of cat yronwode reinforced that way of thinking. Not much got by that lady. My time at Image Comics in the early 90's.... well...let's just say that not a lot of attention was put on detail of real items. Lots of speed lines and guns that were made up was the rule of the day.

Fellow writer Chuck Dixon is also one of those writers that likes it right. He and I both will trudge through loads of books, newspapers and other sources to make sure the artist we're working knows the difference between a Smith & Wesson Model 29 357 magnum and a Smith & Wesson Model 19 357 magnum. I take that back.... it's not much of a trudge. We usually just open up our nearest desk drawer and find the real gun for reference.

More so today than any other time the sources for reference are almost boundless. The internet has seen to that. It's cut down on many trips to the library and the copy place. I use it on a daily basis finding reference on things I'm writing about.

After 15 years of writing I've had the pleasure of working with lots of different artists. 99% of them love the fact that when they get a script from me they find photos, pictures, and books on what I'm talking about in the script. That other 1% is just lazy and doesn't wanna have to look real hard at the reference. They are the ones that draw an automatic pistol that shucks the casings out the wrong side. They also don't work with me anymore.... maybe that's why they're smiling.

You can be real hard core about reference or you can go lightly on it. Depends on the subject of the story. If you're doing one with 300 Spartans you better have some in-depth reference for the artist. If you're doing some space opera where the world is run by weird creatures...well, have a field day and just make it all up.

Where can you find reference?

It's all around you. I've already touched on the internet. There's a web site for everything. I find myself using www.google.com the most. It's fast and it has found some of the best sites for me. Another that I use and have lots of success with is www.ask.com; it really pinpoints things for me. Of course there is www.yahoo.com and many others, but I find that Google.com and ask.com find most everything for me.

Long ago I started files on reference. I think the great artist Wally Wood called it his "morgue". A file for any kind of reference that comes up. I've got em' for guns, clothing, machines, buildings, animals, etc. These files are filled with photos and info taken from magazines and newspapers. Things I've cut out and filed away. My office library is filled with over 5000 hardbacks on various subjects. All in their own sections. I'm pretty certain there isn't any-





thing that I'm gonna write about that I don't have reference on. Kinda like a Boy Scout on steroids.... always prepared and then some.

You want to start you files and make sure that you keep them in some sort of order. If not then you end up with a mess not to mention a fire hazard. Start neat and you'll keep neat.

Make sure you have enough room to grow. You'll be surprised how fast it'll grow. Metal file cabinets are cheap and hold a lot. Plastic crates, notebooks with dividers, as well as shelves. All are pretty cheap and if maintained will not take up too much room.

Another thing my dad used to tell me was "A man without a knife is no man at all." It's true. By having a pocket knife in your pocket or book bag at all times you have the ability to whip it out and cut out any newspaper or magazine article that you just happen to come across. But don't go and cut up books in the library.... they ain't yours to cut up, amigo.

While doing the book *The Black Terror* for Eclipse in the early 90's I remember that Dan Brereton, the painter/artist on the series, had all of these cool shots of his family and friends modeling and posing for the characters in the book. He was dead on with the poses and the art turned out so much better because of his photo reference. I did the same with the book *Parts Unknown* that Brad Gorby and I created. I was lucky enough to have some friends that worked at Image Comics in production and design that had a striking resemblance to the three main characters in *Parts Unknown*. Another person in the office was a professional photographer

on the side. We all got together and did a fun photo reference session. It really helped Gorby out when he was drawing the book and made everything a little more realistic. You don't have to have a pro photographer, a friend with a camera will suffice, but you can do it yourself and get more people involved and make the whole experience a blast.

The only time you should use comic books as reference is when you're looking over an established character or the back history of that character's book. Why reference a gun from a comic when you can find a photo of the real thing.

So while you're working on that new script, story idea, or developing a new character, start searching out and collecting that reference ahead of time. You'll have it when you and the artist are ready to put the ink to paper. You'll also be surprised how much you'll learn during the process. Nothing wrong with being a little smarter.

Now go forth with pocketknife in hand and fill that file cabinet up!

By the way...if you're looking for a rugged real man type to star as the hero in your next script, just write to me and I'll send you reference photos of ME!!!

Beau Smith

Professional Real Man and the camera's best friend.

The Universe at Your Finger Tips Thoughts on Scripting Comic Books

by Tom Bierbaum

Where do writers
get their ideas?

There's no real answer to that, of course. Ideas can and do come at any time from any source. And some of the really talented writers out there probably never have to work at it — the ideas are just always there when they need them.

But if that's not the way it works for you — if you have trouble coming up with ideas — what can you do about it? Well, there's a question we can sink our teeth into...

1. Coming up with ideas is a skill that relies on a set of "muscles" you can and should exercise and build up.

You can't help but figure this one out if you've ever been lucky enough to work with Keith Giffen (as we did in our old "Legion of Super-Hero" days). Whenever we were at a point where an idea was needed, Keith was always there with a suggestion, and if we shot it down for any reason, he always had another one, and then another, and another. Some of his ideas weren't practical, some just weren't very good, but most of them were positively inspired.

Why? Maybe he was just born more creative than the rest of us, but I think the real key to Keith's creativity is that he doesn't mind being told one of his ideas doesn't work and moving on to the next one.

That can be the trick — don't feel like every one of your ideas has to be perfect and don't fall in love with any one of them. View ideas the same way a good artist views the lines he puts down on paper. It usually takes several sketchy lines to come up with just the perfect line for any segment of any drawing, and a good artist just sketches and sketches till he gets the line that's right and then all the other lines get erased without hesitation.

You've got to be that way with your

ideas. For every one idea you use, you should have come up with five or ten that popped into your head, got kicked around a little and then discarded without hesitation because they weren't quite right. Just as an artist keeps sketching away until he gets it right, keep playing with different ideas until you get the one that's perfect for your needs.

It may sound simple, but a lot of us have a tendency to fall in love with anything that comes out of our head. An idea that's merely pretty good can seem wonderful because it's *ours*.

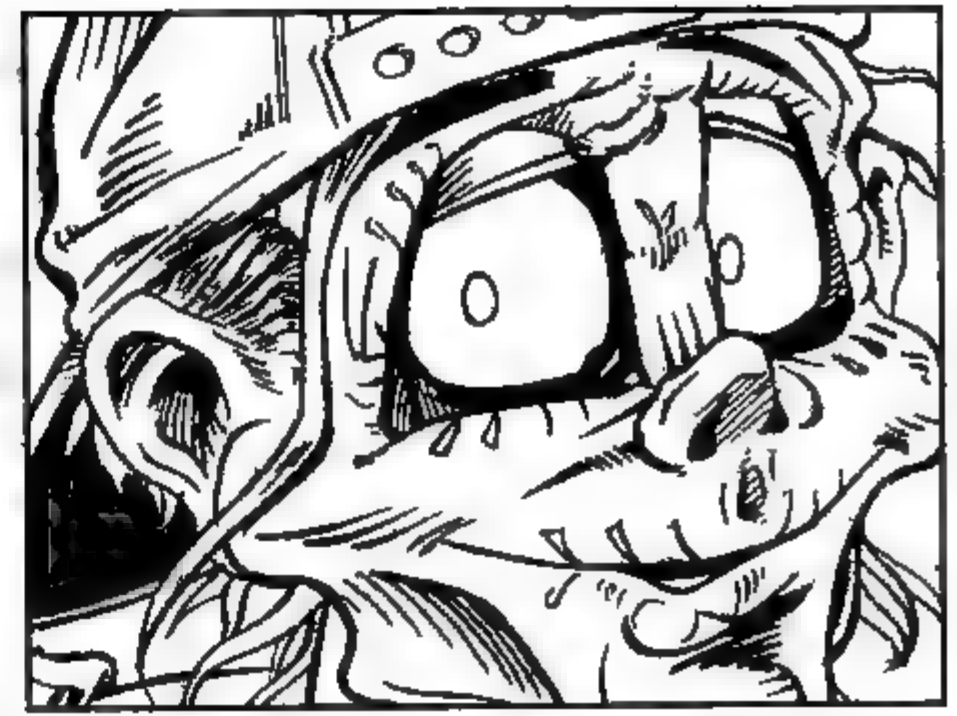
And how many of us can't stand to hear someone say one of our ideas is lousy? The more it gets criticized the more stubbornly we defend it. Probably the best way to be truly creative is to free yourself of that stubbornness — to start welcoming thoughtful criticism as valuable feedback that trains you to keep on "mentally sketching" till you've found the idea that really works for you.

And the way you do that, again, is to start building up those creative muscles by constantly generating five or 10 ideas for every one that you actually need or use. Make yourself — *expect* yourself to be — one of those people who's always got plenty of ideas ready whenever one is needed. Keep doing it and you'll get good at it, just as surely as you'll get good at doing pushups if you do 'em every morning.

2. Creativity resides in our subconscious minds.

As often as not, when you hear the story of how a great song was written, or a great invention was thought up, or a great story was hatched, the answer is that it came in a dream.

Why would that be? Well, our conscious minds are mostly occupied with everyday problems of logic and reason. To operate at maximum efficiency in life, we have to see a red traffic light and have our brains react by stopping the car



without hesitation, not spend a few moments kicking around creative alternative responses. But while our conscious mind has been very well-trained to respond in orderly, predictable ways so we can interact safely and efficiently with the world at large, there's always a stifled part of our mind that wants to explore all those alternate combinations. And that's the part of our mind that takes over when we dream, when we enter that world where things never quite make sense and events occur in odd, nonsensical, unpredictable patterns.

And that's where a radical, breakthrough idea often presents itself — where the leap of imagination and inspiration that eludes our conscious intellect will make itself known.

It's partly because dreams tend to be more about our emotional reactions than our rational responses. We *feel* our dreams more than we think them, and a lot of times a great creative leap forward occurs on that level. If all it took was a little rational brainpower, anyone could do it. But to think a thought that no one else has ever thought before — compose a beautiful new song or write a compelling new story — you have to tap into a different, deeper and less rational region of the brain.

3. So learn to tap into your dreams.

Train yourself to remember your dreams by writing down what you've dreamt as soon as you wake up. And teach yourself to dream about certain things by concentrating on them before you go to sleep. Give yourself assignments (for example, come up with a really fearsome villain or a great setting for a fight) and concentrate on that as you doze off.

Usually nothing much comes of it, but every once in a while something really clicks. And even if this approach never helps you a bit, you're no worse off than if you'd just let all those dreams race off into the ether.



4. And tap into your semi-conscious.

I think there's an even more productive mental state than dreaming for hatching ideas, which is that semi-conscious state you pass through just as you're dozing off. You have slightly more control over your thoughts than if you're completely asleep, but the strangest and sometimes most inspired ideas have a way of popping up at just this time.

One of the great inventors used to search for ideas by dozing in a soft chair. He'd keep his hands on the arms of the chair, but use them to play with handfuls of metal ball bearings, having placed metal dishes on the floor below to catch the ball bearings if he dropped them. Of course, anytime this inventor slipped completely into sleep, down would come the heavy ball bearings, crashing noisily into the metal dishes, waking up the inventor. Then he'd pick up the ball bearings and lull himself back into the desired state of semi-consciousness and go fishing for more inspired ideas.

He and many creative people have found this is the state where your most creative ideas can be found. And why would that be?

5. The best way to find something is to stop looking for it.

Ever notice how you'll look and look and look for some important object and finally have to give up the search, only to stumble across the elusive object sometime later, after it's become the furthest thing from your mind? Or how you'll blank on a certain word and the harder you try to think of it, the further it runs away from you? Then five minutes later, when your mind is somewhere else completely — *bam!* — there's the word you couldn't think of five minutes earlier if your life depended on it.

For some reason, our minds tend to find things best when we use "indirect vision" — when we don't concentrate too hard on the exact thing we're looking for.

And so it is with creative ideas. They pop into your head whenever they feel like it, and as often as not it's when the problem is the furthest thing from your mind.

6. So write things down!

I tend to always have a scrap of paper with me, 24 hours a day, especially in bed at night, so any interesting idea or notion that pops into my head gets written down. Sure, when the idea occurs to you, it seems obvious and like it'll remain there in the front of your mind forever. But believe me, the most incredible, brilliant ideas in the world can vanish in seconds and be gone forever if you don't get them down on paper.

And one big advantage to writing things down is that a lot of times an idea looks and feels a lot different in the cold light of day than it did in the semi-conscious moment it struck you. Nine times out of 10, something that seemed like a stroke of genius turns out to be some silly stream-of-consciousness nonsense that will never mean a thing to any third party. But that one other time in 10, an idea that seemed marginal or unworkable when it first occurred to you will ultimately prove to be the stroke of genius you've been laboring to find.

So get it all down, the good, the bad and the ugly. Remember that you're mentally sketching all the time, anyway, so you *want* to have five or ten throwaway ideas for every good one that really sticks.

As for the ideas you don't use right now, make sure you're collecting them somewhere, so they'll be around and ready to be pressed into service should they be

right for some future assignment.

7. Don't be afraid to come up with a bad idea.

If you want the ideas to come flowing freely out of your imagination, you've got to stop inhibiting the flow of ideas by editing and censoring what you put down on paper. Every idea, no matter how dumb, clichéd or improper, can go down on that paper because you expect and *want* to have plenty of ideas to toss aside before you get to the one that's just right. And the dumbest throw-away nothing of an idea can lead to that once-in-a-lifetime stroke of genius if you just let your mind play with every idea that pops out.

The people who seem like creative geniuses, I think, are the ones who accept and embrace everything that comes out of their minds and end up with a gigantic, wildly varied array of ideas to choose from. The rest of us, meanwhile, timidly allow just a trickle of ideas to escape from our sub-conscious and we end up working with a tiny fraction of the ideas those creative geniuses have on their pallets.

And by the way, this doesn't mean we *use* the bad ideas that occur to us, it means we kick them around to make sure they can't lead to something that really *does* work.

8. Figure out what matters to you and write about that.

Think about what really makes you mad, what really makes you happy, what really makes you sad, etc. Not what you think makes most *other* people mad, happy or sad — that's what's already being done out there. Use what really makes you — *you* — mad, happy or sad.

Stories work best when the readers get emotionally involved in them, and readers get emotionally involved when they *unexpectedly* see themselves and their personal struggles in your story.

For example, I was always a fan of the "Seinfeld" TV show, but it didn't fully win me over, heart and soul, until I saw the episode where Jerry broke up with a girlfriend because she liked those insipid Dockers TV commercials of the early 1990s. Those commercials annoyed me beyond words and to see a sitcom character who hated them as much as I did created a transcendent bond beyond anything mere gag

writing could have accomplished.

And think about how Jerry Seinfeld became one of the richest guys in the universe mostly by making little observations about the tribulations, frustrations and idiocies of mundane, everyday life — observations *that nobody had made before*.

So figure out what really matters to you, personally, and build stories around those things. If nobody else has ever written about them, don't let that scare you away. It's good that they haven't, so you'll be tapping into something ahead of everyone else.

Of course, you have to explore these personal likes and dislikes in a way that relates to your readership. I'm a big fan of the Indy Racing League and feel strong emotions over the way the rival CART organization has attacked and damaged the IRL over the years, but nobody's going to want to read a Spider-Man story about any of that. So if it were my job to write a Spider-Man story, I wouldn't write about the IRL, I'd write about a controversy in Spider-Man's life that featured the dynamics of the IRL-CART rift and try to get the readers as emotionally involved with Spider-Man's side as I am with the IRL's. For example, it seems to me like the rich car owners of CART have used their wealth and influence to get sports editors — most of whom don't know or care a fig about Indy car racing — to savage the IRL and unfairly cause my beloved league great harm. And that's the kind of thing some critic of Spider-Man could be doing that could really get the reader's blood boiling.

9. Believe it or not, you *are* living a remarkable life.

They say write what you know, but it always feels like you're stuck in some horribly mundane, middle-class, white-bread world that nobody would ever be interested in reading about. Why can't you live in the kind of colorful, exciting worlds the great writers found themselves in? Well, I have the feeling all those great writers were surrounded with just as much banality as you and I. What made them great was the way they looked deeper and found the really interesting, really universal human events that were going on around them.

Yes, on the surface, most of us live humdrum lives among very average people. But every block of every town

and city of every country in the world includes a few people who are mentally ill, a few who are victims of or perpetrators of incest, a few who are involved in some dangerously illegal scam, a few who tell the funniest damn stories you ever heard, a few who are the most annoying people you ever met, a few who just aren't on the same wavelength as the rest of the world, etc., etc. Maybe there's someone you're madly and secretly in love with. Or someone who's madly and secretly in love with you. Maybe there's someone who gave you a simple, kind word when it made all the difference in the world. Or who kicked you when you were down and inflicted a wound that will never heal.

If something happened in your life that matters to you, it *matters*. And you can draw on that to write a story that matters to your readers.

The people who really get our hearts beating, for positive and negative reasons, are the people who're closest to us, and they're the people who need to populate our stories. Get to really know and understand the people around you and build your fictitious worlds around characters who embody those strengths and weaknesses, loves and hatreds, triumphs and downfalls.

As a talented writer, you have the ability to see something unique in the life that surrounds you, and it's those observations that will make what you write touch your readers in a way no other writer can match.

10. Pull your inspiration from unexpected sources.

Draw ideas from other areas that interest you that don't get much attention within the comics community. Don't recycle this summer's blockbuster movie or last week's "Star Trek: Voyager" plot. Don't borrow from the videos you see incessantly on MTV or try to adapt the hottest video game out there. Don't mimic the current top-selling comics.

Do pull ideas out of entertainment from earlier generations and foreign cultures (with the possible exception of Japanese animation and comics, which are becoming almost inside jokes in the industry these days), novels, plays, operas, more obscure forms of music — the kind of thing most of your audience is unfamiliar with. But don't make it homework, make it something you have a

passion for, so you'll be passing along your passion, not your idea of what the readers "ought" to have.

Your non-comic interests are part of what make you unique and gives you something to say that's different from any other writer. Tap into those interests, again in ways the reader can relate to.

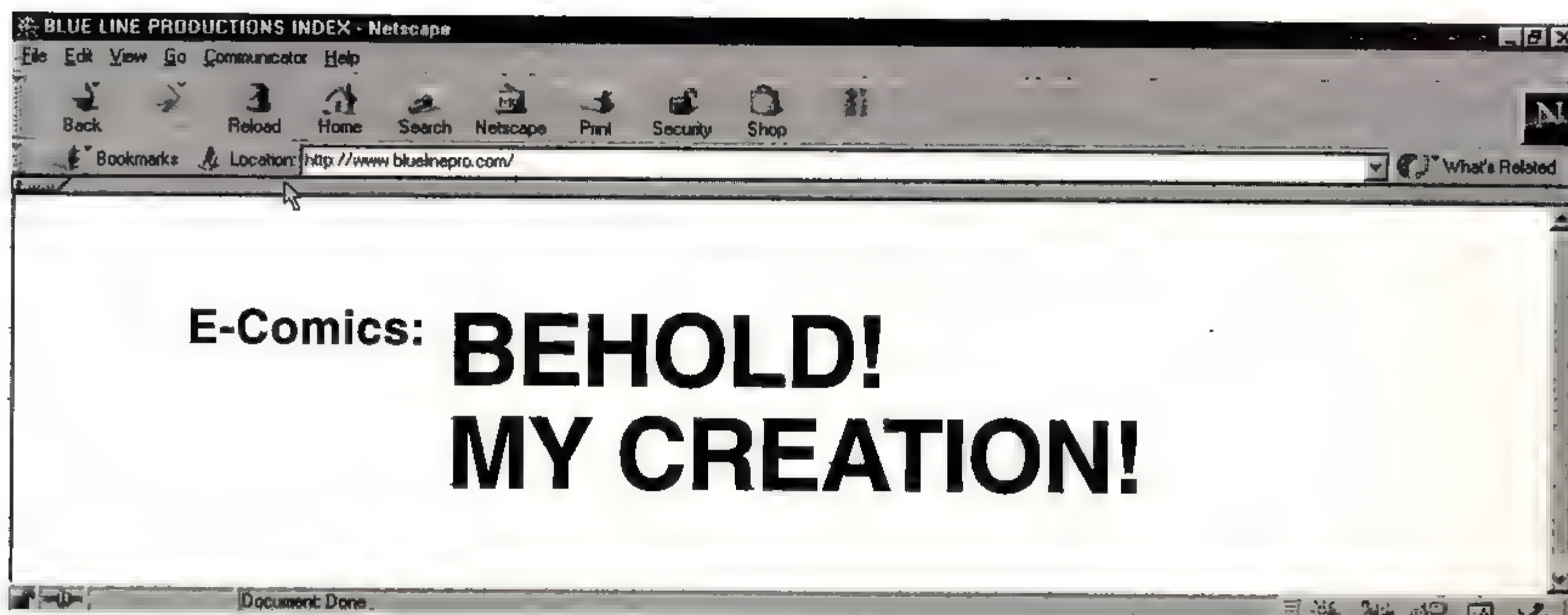
11. Envision the most marketable idea possible and then come up with the Great Story that follows through on that idea.

If you're as old as I am, you remember a day when comics would come up with some really incredible, absurd cover scene and you'd just have to buy the comic to find out how that scene could *possibly* happen in the comic book itself (Example: a desperate Batman has rushed up to a newsstand vendor and is exclaiming: "I need a copy of Batman Comics! My Life Depends On It!" and the vendor is replying, "Sorry, Batman, we're all sold out!"). Usually this gimmick-cover approach resulted in lousy stories that didn't live up to the promise of the fantastic covers, but it *did* get you to buy the comic.

And that's how comics need to be written in these lean times — figure out the kind of story they can really sell the comic and then find a way to turn that far-out idea into a great story. As an example, when we were writing Xena, we thought the most commercial idea possible was to have Xena and Hercules marry. It was an impossible story that could never really happen, so naturally the readers would want to see how in the world we could have it happen in our comic. Of course, there's a hundred ways you can tell that story and 99 of them are crummy cop-outs, but we certainly did our best to come up with that 100th version that was actually a good story that realized the promise of a highly marketable initial idea.

So when you need to come up with ideas, think of the very things you *can't* do with a concept and figure out a great story that finds a way to make it happen. It isn't easy, but when you train yourself to be able to do it, you'll have a skill that can really sell comic books.

Tom can be reached at
tom@bluelinepro.com



by Mike Maydak
artwork by Kurt Einhaus

Why do we appreciate art? Why do the colors and shapes of illustrations and paintings mesmerize us? How come we let our mind and attention wander between wondrous words of visionary literature? What is the origin of this fascination that beckons us so? To answer these questions it is helpful to understand the keepers of this garden of curiosity and astonishment: the artist themselves.

Who are these inventive warriors? Why do they subject themselves to the will of the brush and pen in such dedicated fashion? What are their drives?

For some it is the finished product. For others it is the benefits obtained after the work is done. But for many, the answer to this motivation lies deep in one concept. It is the hours spent of conscious labor that contributes to what makes art truly spectacular, an expressional masterpiece of the human mind. Yes, many know what I'm talking about. It's that intoxicating state of ecstasy that countless have experienced. It is the deep rich ale we call the creative process. It is the foundation of art itself and the drive to improve oneself and society. An artist cannot be an artist unless he creates and a creation cannot be created unless done by an artist.

In this technological age of fast -pace development of computers and the Internet, this age-old concept lives on. It may not seem so flowery as I presented just a moment ago, but the idea is still the same. I fully realize that this "creative process"

has a pinch of salt mixed with all the sugar (trust me I know). I know many can just as easily associate stress and ulcers with the two words. In the commercial world when a project has to be done, it has to be done, no matter how in tune you are with your creative karma. Just remember, if you create something, no matter if it's the single colored pattern on toilet paper, you are an artist in your own sense. An artist whose contributions and innovations will hopefully go down in the history books as an encouragement to others.

This leads us to the art of comics. Not just any comics mind you, but e-comics.

Ah yes, e-comics. The digitized form of the printed media we all love. The art field of e-comics is a vast frontier. Unexplored territory that is eagerly looked upon by hungry and inventive pilgrims waiting to grab their share of the land, preferably one with a nice **green** meadow.

But before you can claim that lot of land you have to have a wagon, the means to your destination, the know-how to get where you want. How do you get what you want with e-comics? Well, first you have to be able to create them. I'm not talking about the pencilling, inking, or other aspects of the process. That's what the rest of Sketch is for. I'm talking about converting your already finished creation from your larva art boards to the cocoon stage on your computer, and lastly to the final transformation to the beautiful butterfly that is your e-comic.

In the next few articles I will discuss two different ways of playing Dr. Frankenstein. Both entail the stages mentioned above and have similar beginnings. Only later on in the converting stage is there a split in the path you take. The first form of an e-comic we will discuss is having the comic posted on a web page. This one is the simpler of the two, but probably not the wave of the future. The second way we will discuss is converting your comic into the e-book reader format. With this conversion, you gain the security and distribution regulation that this format can provide. In this form you have a lot better chance to sell your e-comic, instead of giving it away free off the net.

The initial order of business is probably one you thought was a "given". Nevertheless, it is an important enough stage to warrant some discussion. Unless you created your artwork using a graphic program, you are going to have to scan your art onto your computer.

This can get tricky, depending on the size of your artwork compared to the size of scanner. If the size of your work is less than the size of your scanner that's wonderful, but usually it doesn't work out that way. I don't know many people who have an 11x17 scanner, the perfect size for a comic art board, and chances are you don't either. But besides handing out a wad of cash at Kinko's, there are some inexpensive means around this little annoying obstacle.

One way is taking a photograph. This would solve your issue of size, but would call for some serious high-resolution film. Overall, I would avoid this at all cost. You'll find factors such as lighting and maintaining a level focus plaguing your final image, and you'll have spent precious time hoping the pictures turned out all right. It's just not worth the trouble for a piece of artwork that doesn't fit your scanner by a few inches. Unless you're working with a six-foot tall canvas of course, then you have little choice.

You can always shrink down and make a copy of your artwork using a copy machine. There are advantages as well as some disadvantages this way. For one thing, it's relatively simple to operate a copier to reduce an image to an 8 1/2 x 11 size. Not the exact size you are looking for but small enough to fit on a standard scanner. Depending on the type of copy machine you are using, the level of quality for your image may vary. Most new copiers today will give you a crisp, clean, almost perfect copy of your work. Some of the older ones may blur or smear your image a bit. If your work was done with color (paint, pencils, etc), then you definitely would want to use a quality color copier. This makes the help of the good people at Kinkos all the more tempting.

Another way to get a large

image into the computer though a small scanner is to scan it in two pieces. This method is free, assuming you have a scanner, and only costs you your time and patience. When you scan, be sure to have both scans of your artwork perfectly lined up with each other. If one scan is off, you'll see it right away. Your final image will look like it's about to get scrambled. Make sure you have some of the same area of your artwork in both scans. This gives you some room to work with. Using PhotoShop, place both images in the same file as two different layers. Move one image over the other until it lines up. Zoom in real close if you want to. The closer the match, the better. Now flatten the layers together so you have one solid image.

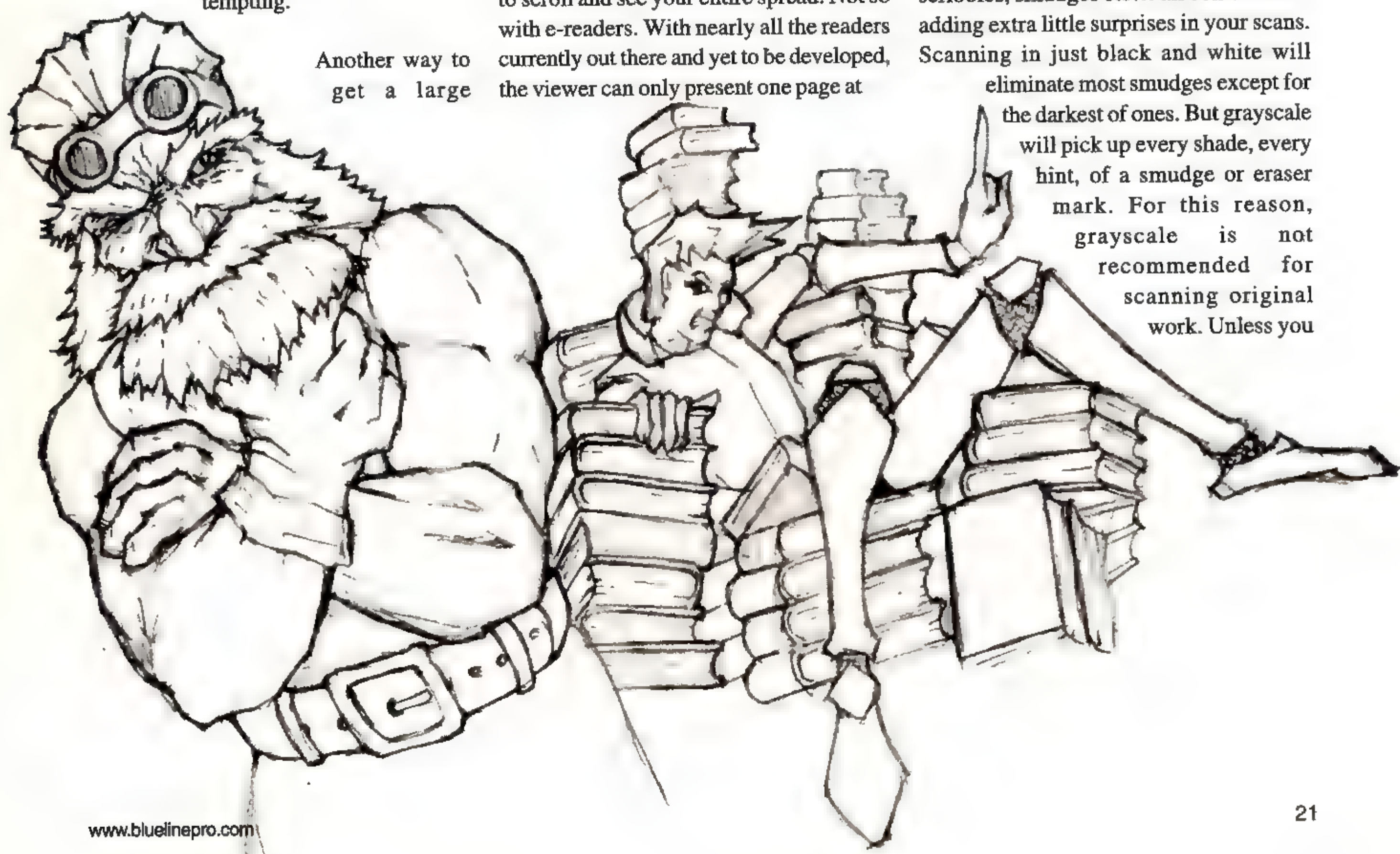
Scanning a double page spread is basically the same process as above. Scan the spread like you would if the boards were two separate pieces. Instead of merging two images together on one file, you will be merging four. Follow the same ideas as before to help you along.

But you have to keep in mind a few things about two page spreads and e-comics. Are they all that necessary? Are they practical when applied to e-comics? If you're posting your comic on a website, it's no big deal. A person will be able to scroll and see your entire spread. Not so with e-readers. With nearly all the readers currently out there and yet to be developed, the viewer can only present one page at

a time. This is a big problem for spreads since the image gets split right down the middle. You can shrink down a two-page spread to the size of one page, but chances are you won't want to do that. The amount of detail you will lose will make it not worth it. Plus, as of now most readers don't have a rotate feature. Your horizontal spread will most likely end up vertical.

Now that we know of ways to get big images though small scanners, we'll move on to actual scanning. One thing we will try to keep in mind throughout this entire process is the idea of getting the biggest bang for our buck. Our goal is to have the best image quality we can get, but have it take up the least amount of memory space possible. Whether you're going to post your comic on the net or convert it into an e-book reader format, you want to keep the uploading and downloading times as small as possible, just a way to keep things convenient for people. This quick accessibility will give them a more uplifting outlook when they view your comic. Otherwise, expect some unattainable expectation to build up in their head, only to have them slam the X button with their little clicker.

Make sure you keep your original artwork clean. Eraser marks, unwanted scribbles, smudges etc... all contribute to adding extra little surprises in your scans. Scanning in just black and white will eliminate most smudges except for the darkest of ones. But grayscale will pick up every shade, every hint, of a smudge or eraser mark. For this reason, grayscale is not recommended for scanning original work. Unless you



have gray washes or pencils that haven't been inked, it's best to go with straight black and white. It's cleaner, and saves memory space at the same time. Remember, when you scan at high dpi, the greater chance some specks will appear. Just be aware of that so you can keep an eye out for them.

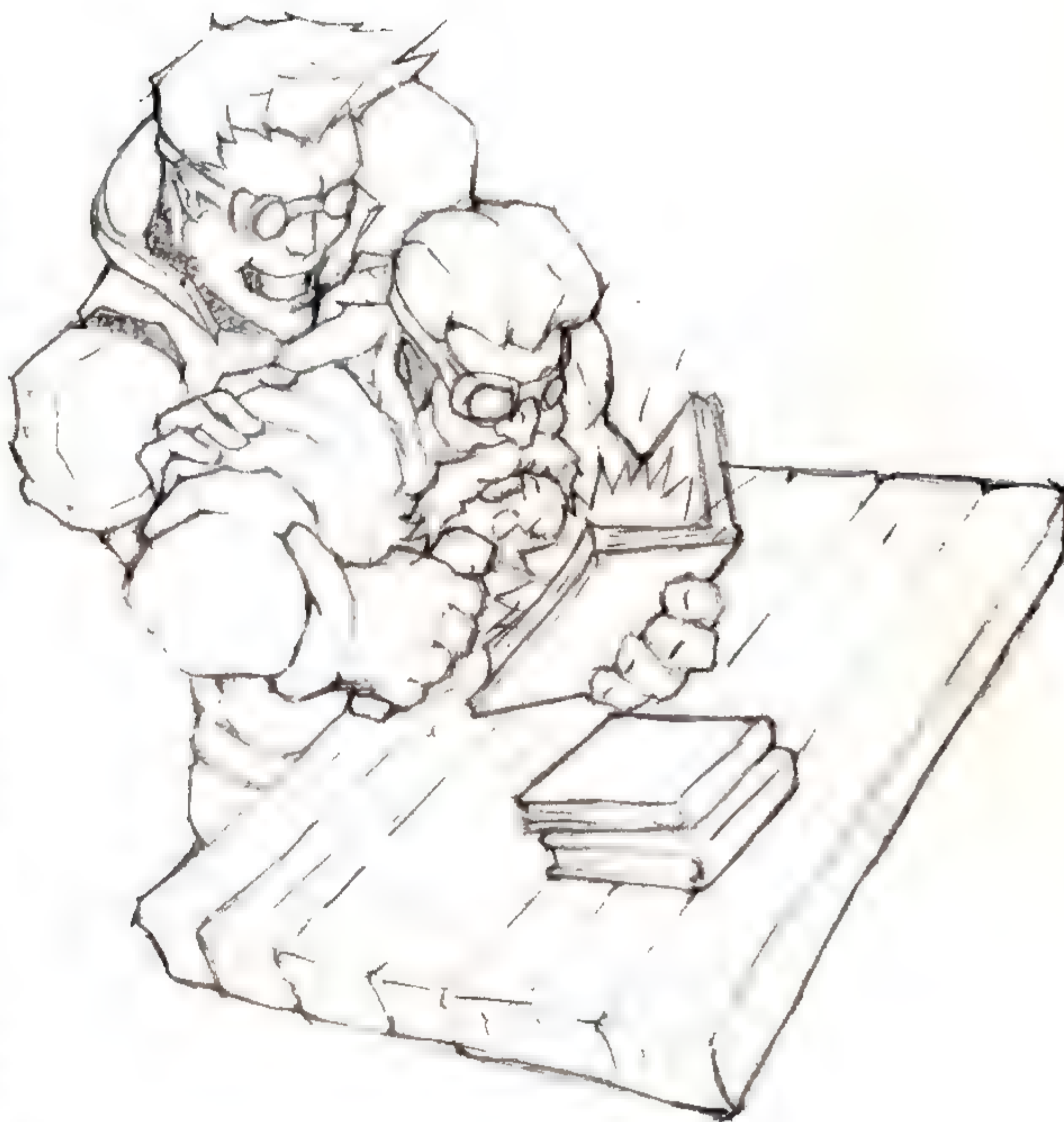
When dealing with color, I recommend scanning in 256 colors. Your final product won't be able to present the quality of a million or billion colors scan. So save your time and hard drive space, scan with 256 colors

This brings up the issue of dpi. Should I scan at a high dpi? Should I scan at a low dpi? Personally, I believe it is better to scan at a high dpi first. This allows you to maintain some flexibility in your creation. It may take longer to scan, but it'll be worth it. Once the image is in the computer, you can always go from high to low dpi, but not in the opposite direction. Scanning at a 300 dpi allows you to see your image in print-like quality. You will be able to see and find fine details that otherwise you might have missed. When converted, this will improve the quality of the lower dpi image in the long run.

Viewed from the web, a 300-dpi image will be converted to a 72 dpi, the standard for the Internet, and will look huge. That's why when the time comes, you will be the one to convert your image to a 72 dpi so it will fit the screen. Most e-book readers will do this for you and make the image fit in their readers. Going to a 72 dpi also helps cut back on the memory space, something we are always looking for.

Colored images add an extra field to the whole process: deciding what color space you should use, CMYK or RGB. CMYK simulates printing inks and is commonly used by print designers, while RGB is a color space that is used for computer screen based work. Since you are not looking to print your comic (well, at least not yet.) and e-comics is screen based, you'll need to use RGB color space.

While in RGB mode, I recommend converting your colors to index colors. You may lose some quality, but it will be worth



the space it will save. The picture will change a little, so you must decide if it works for you.

You'll want to save your images as a JPG, PNG, or GIF (PDF files for the Adobe Acrobat Reader.). These file types are capable of being converted into e-book reader files, while JPG and GIF files can be viewed by browsers on the Internet. Of all the file types, PNG files take up the least amount of space. I recommend using this type when converting images into an e-book reader file, but not for web postings. Not all browsers will be able to view PNG files. GIF files are the next smallest type and have the capability to be viewed on the net. When deciding between JPG or GIF file types, there may be some advantages to both. GIF files may be smaller, but JPG files might present your image better. It depends mostly on the type of image and your own personal preferences.

Lastly, the final trims on your image size. Reduce the image size to 6x9 inches,

just enough to fit in the 10 3/4 x 6 1/8 size of a standard comic book. This is the size we like to keep our image. This allows us to see the artwork and read the lettering without much of a problem, as well as keep down the size of the file. Many e-book readers will convert your image size so they will fit the readers, making them smaller than you'll want them; a very non-comic friendly feature that will hopefully change in the future with the addition of scrolling and zooming abilities.

Now that we braved the blast furnace of the essentials and survived the heat of the scanner and monitor, we are ready to hammer out the rest of our creative energies. Join me next time in Sketch #9 as we forge together the pieces we worked on into a shimmering new e-comic.

M2

Mike can be reached at
m2@bluelinepro.com

WORLD OUTSIDE COMICS

THE WORLD OUTSIDE COMICS

by Ted Adams

Several issues ago, I had an article in Sketch that provided some tips on how to work with commercial clients. Since that article appeared, I've received some questions about how a new artist can get this type of work.

Just to quickly recap, I'm talking about doing comic book style illustration for non-comic book publishers. This includes magazine covers, spot illustrations, character design, storyboards for animation, and more.

There are resources that allow you to reach thousands of potential buyers. My favorites are:

1. *The Artist & Graphic Designer's Market: 2,500 Places to Sell Your Art & Design.*

Everyone who wants to do commercial work should have a copy of this book. I've got the 2000 Edition, but a quick search on Amazon shows that the 2001 Edition is available and retails for \$24.99 (\$19.99 on Amazon). The 2001 edition's ISBN is 0-89879-979-1.

This huge book gives you the names and address for the art director at every major publication in the US. It also has a special section on multimedia and animation markets. Every listing is accompanied with a description of the buyer's needs, how much work they purchase in a year, and how you can submit your work. If you're serious about

doing this kind of work, you must have a copy of this book.

2. *The Graphic Artists Guild's Directory of Illustration.*

This HUGE book contains full-page ads from all types of illustrators. The book is sent out, free of charge, to over 20,000 art directors all over the country. Pretty much anyone who buys art for a living gets this Directory. We advertised in the most recent edition and started getting calls as soon as the book was released.

The catch to this one is that it can be expensive for newcomers. Plus, you'll be competing with hundreds of artists who have an established track record. The Directory does offer payment plans and there are discounts if you make your ad reservations in advance.

The only downside to the Directory of Illustration, besides the cost, is that they have strict guidelines for building your ad. I find their restrictions force you to build rather dull ads and, in a way, make every page look somewhat alike. There are ways around their restrictions, but they all increase the cost of your ad. In addition to the printed edition, they also offer some online services where you can post your work on their internet site. Just like the regular book, there is a charge for this service.

You can get more information at

www.directoryofillustration.com.

3. *Showcase Illustration*

Similar to the Directory of Illustration, this book contains ads from all kinds of illustrators and is sent out to over 20,000 art buyers. The Showcase Illustration is less restrictive in the design of your ad but, like the Directory of Illustration, can be an expensive venture.

They also have an interesting service called "the i spot". For a fee, you can post your stock illustrations on their website. Potential clients then do a search by



keyword to find illustrations that match their needs. If they want to use your illustration, they pay you a licensing fee.

For more information on Showcase Illustration, check out www.theispot.com.

4. Local creative directories

Many communities have creative directories that provide artists a chance to showcase their work. In San Diego, we have the San Diego Creative Directory, which is like a fancy yellow pages that only provides information for creative services. You can take out a full-page ad or just run a short listing in the directory section.

Again, this can be an expensive proposition, but it is 100% targeted at the people who could buy your work.

Check your local phone books to see if this opportunity exists in your area.

5. eLance

eLance is like eBay for artists and graphic designers. Both buyers and sellers can put up listings describing what they need or what they can provide. I find that most of the buyers don't have much money and often have unrealistic expectations. But, this is a great place for a new artist to start building a portfolio and may provide some networking opportunities.

Check out www.elance.com for more information.

Next time around, I'll give some tips on setting prices. If there's anything else you'd like to see me cover, please send an email to ted@ideaanddesignworks.com.

Ted Adams has worked in comics, and its related fields, for over 10 years. Putting in time at Eclipse Books, Dark Horse Comics, WildStorm Productions, and Todd McFarlane Entertainment, he and three friends started their own company, Idea + Design Works, in 1999. Check them out at www.ideaanddesignworks.com. Ted can be reached at ted@ideaanddesignworks.com.

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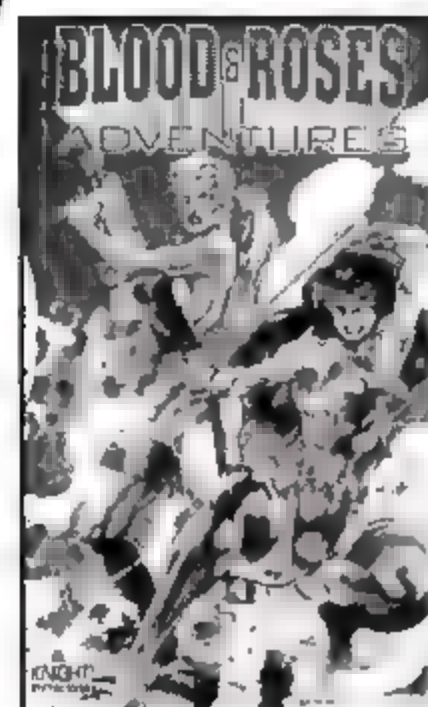
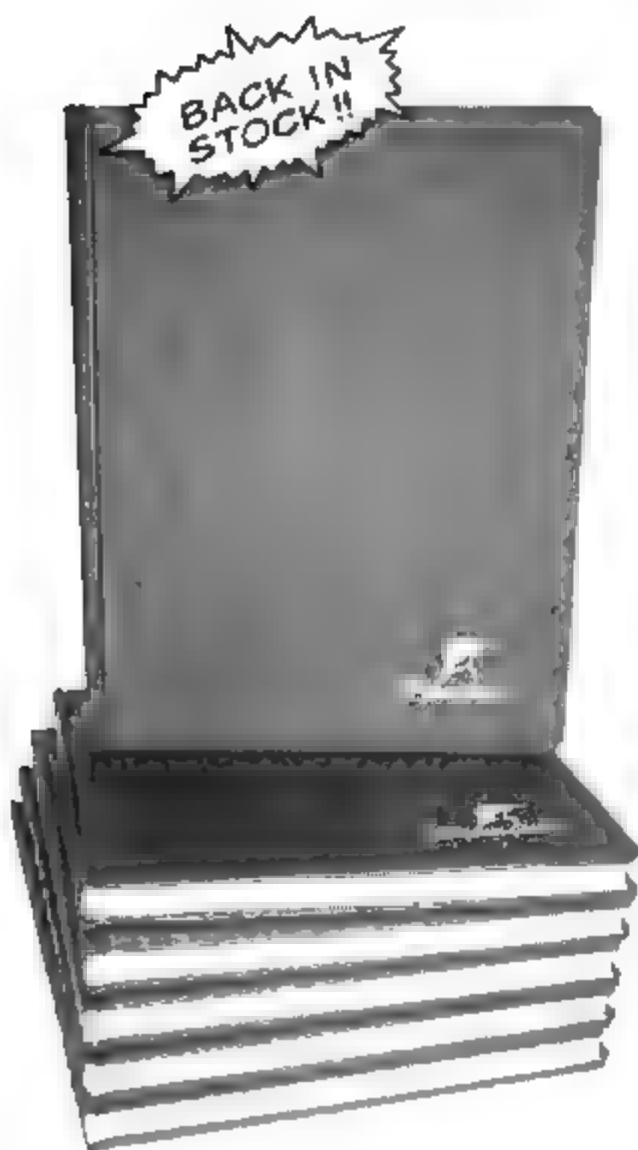
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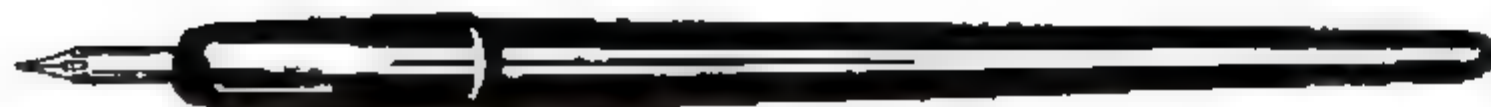
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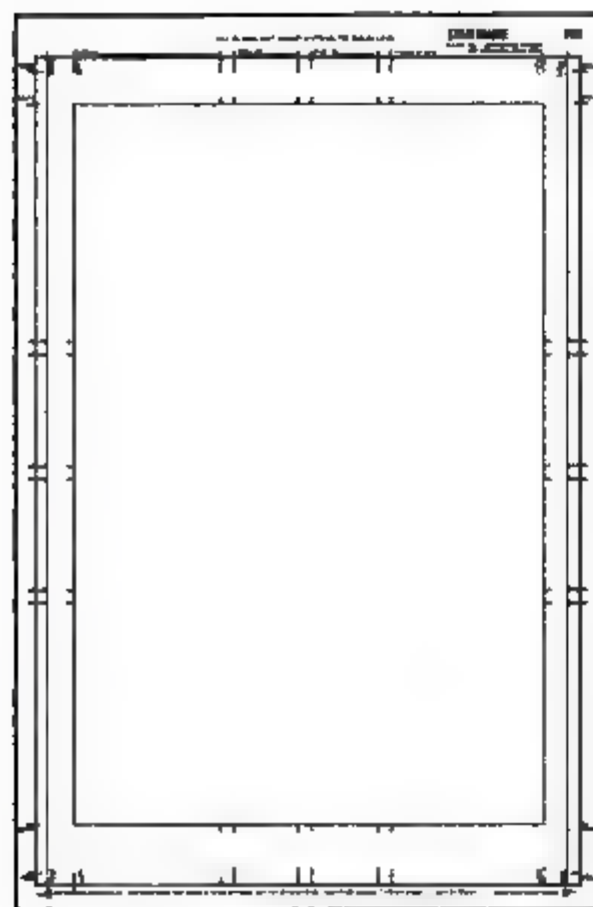
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#CB1001 Blood & Roses Trade Paperback vol.1 first printing \$12.95

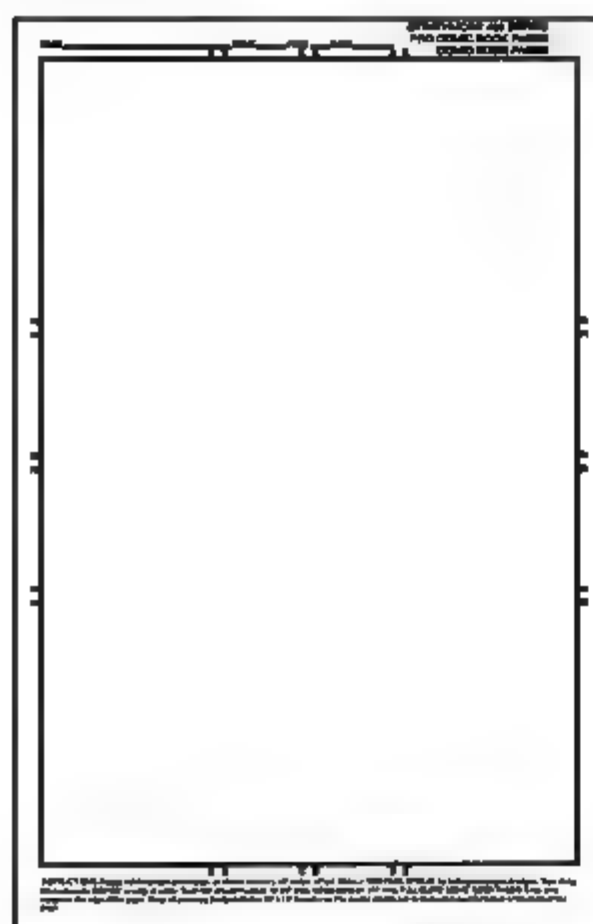


COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS

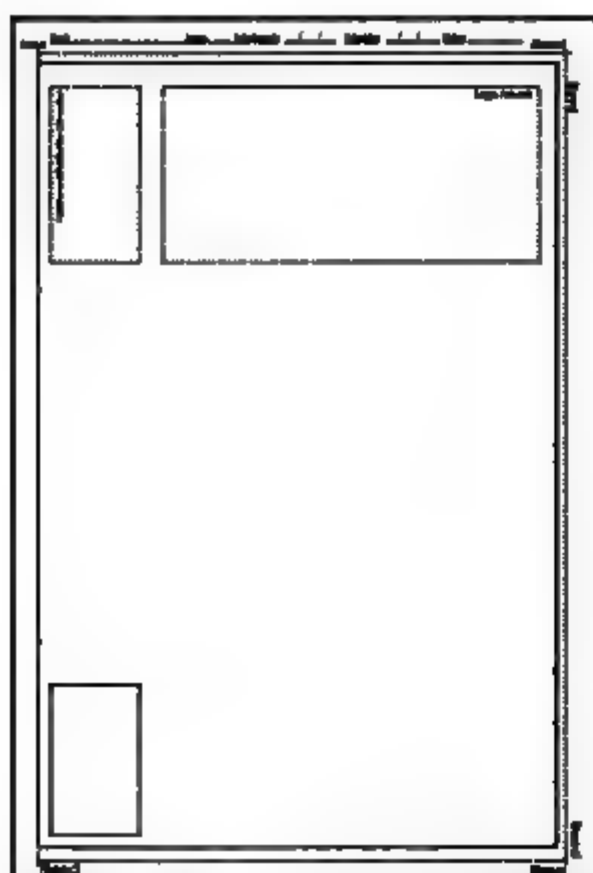


Full Trim Format Art Boards

PLY:
Ply is the thickness of the paper. A 2 ply paper has two pieces of paper pressed together and a 3 ply has 3 pieces of paper pressed together which is thicker than 2 ply.



Traditional Format Art Boards



Cover Sheets

Blue Line now offers comic artist an full trim comic book board to draw your comics. Just recently comic book publishers have been using full trim comic book boards to draw their comics. Blue Line has designed a full trim page that fits most requirements for full bleed comics, but can also be used to draw traditional comic book page formats. Special dotted borders helps the artist to keep the important illustrations within an area to be sure it's not lost to trimming.

PREMIERE300(STRATHMORE)

300 Series Full Trim Format

PRO 300 Series Comic Book Boards is an economical heavyweight paper. Like the rest of the Blue Line products the Pro 300 Series is pre-printed with a non-photo blue border that allows the artist to draw comics the actual size that professionals do.

• **PRO 300 Series (SMOOTH)** surface is a 100lb. 100% acid free board. This Strathmore board is ideal for pen ink work and is also suited for pencil and marker.

- **ITEM# BL1041 SRP \$17.00**

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/ bagged

• **PRO 300 Series (REGULAR)** toothy surface is a 100lb. 100% acid free board. This Strathmore board works well with pencils, charcoal and watercolor.

- **ITEM# BL1042 SRP \$17.00**

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/ bagged

PREMIERE400(STRATHMORE)

400 Series Full Trim Format

400 Series already has a very serious history. Comic Book Boards 400 series is printed on the finest art paper available, **Strathmore**. Like the rest of the Blue Line products the 400 Series is preprinted with a non-photo blue border that allows the artist to draw comics the actual size that professionals draw

• **S400 Series (SMOOTH)** surface is a 100% acid free bristol. This Strathmore board is ideal for detailed ink work and is also suited for pencil and marker.

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/ bagged.

- **ITEM# BL1043 SMOOTH 2-PLY SRP \$19.00**

- **ITEM# BL1045 SMOOTH 3-PLY SRP \$28.00**

• **S400 Series (REGULAR)** toothy surface is a 100% acid free bristol. This Strathmore board works well with pencils, inks, charcoal and pastel.

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/ bagged.

- **ITEM# BL1044 REGULAR 2-PLY SRP \$19.00**

- **ITEM# BL1046 REGULAR 3-PLY SRP \$28.00**

PREMIERE500(STRATHMORE)

500 Series Full Trim Format

500 series comic book boards is the top of the line for art paper.

Strathmore 500 is 100% cotton fiber, Acid free and unsurpassed for fine pen and pencil work.

• **500 Series (SMOOTH)** surface is a 100% cotton fiber acid free board. This Strathmore board is ideal for pen ink work and is also suited for pencil and marker.

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/ bagged.

- **ITEM# BL1047 SMOOTH 2-PLY SRP \$41.00**

- **ITEM# BL1049 SMOOTH 3-PLY SRP \$57.75**

• **500 Series (REGULAR)** toothy surface is a 100% cotton fiber acid free board. This Strathmore board works well with pencils, charcoal and watercolor.

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/ bagged.

- **ITEM# BL1048 REGULAR 2-PLY SRP \$41.00**

- **ITEM# BL1050 REGULAR 3-PLY SRP \$57.75**

PRO COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS FULL TRIM FORMAT

Blue Line has taken the quality paper that they have used in the "Pro" pages for years and printed a newly designed Full Trim border format in non-photo blue ink.

This offering the artist the quality of Pro pages with an advanced page border.

In addition, each pack also includes one page of Blue Line Comic Book Cover Sheets, specifically laid out with a larger image area for standard comic book cover designs.

Use pencil, ink (brush recommended), markers, wash, acrylics.

- **ITEM# BL1038 SRP \$15.95**

24 pages per pack.

11" x 17" 3- ply brite art boards with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area and 1 Cover Sheet with 10 3/4" x 16" non-photo border printed/ bagged.

PRO COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS TRADITIONAL FORMAT

Pro Comic Book Boards brite white surface offers a smooth surface to pencils and inking with a brush literally glides across the surface (quill pen not recommended). Pro has offered thousands of artist the opportunity to begin their careers on a pre-printed boardslike

the professional publisher uses.

Traditional Format has the original 10" x 15" image border with panel markers for a traditional page layout.

Page size is 11" x 17" with a non-photo blue image area of 10" x 15". In addition, each pack also includes one page of Blue Line Comic Book Cover Sheets, specifically laid out with a larger image area for standard comic book cover designs.

Use pencil, ink (brush recommended), markers, wash, acrylics.

- **ITEM# BL1001 SRP \$15.95**

24 pages per pack.

11" x 17" 3- ply brite art boards with a 10" x 15" non-photo image printed and 1 Cover Sheet with 10 3/4" x 16" non-photo image printed/ bagged.

COMIC BOOK BOARDS

(Traditional Format)

Comic Book Boards are specifically laid out with an image area for standard comic book designs. These boards like the other comic book boards offer an area to write the name of the book the artist is drawing, issue number, page number and date. This helps to keep track of your boards and where they belong. Double page spreads are a snap for an artist. Just take two comic book boards and then butt the sides together, apply tape down the back of those boards and then the artist is ready to illustrate a double-page drawing. Fast and easy with no cutting. They are 24 pages of Brite Art Index. Page size is 11" x 17" with a non-photo blue image area of 10" x 15".

Use pencil, ink (brush), marker, wash.

- **ITEM# BL1003 SRP \$12.95**

24 pages per pack.

11" x 17" pages with a 10" x 15" non-photo image/ bagged

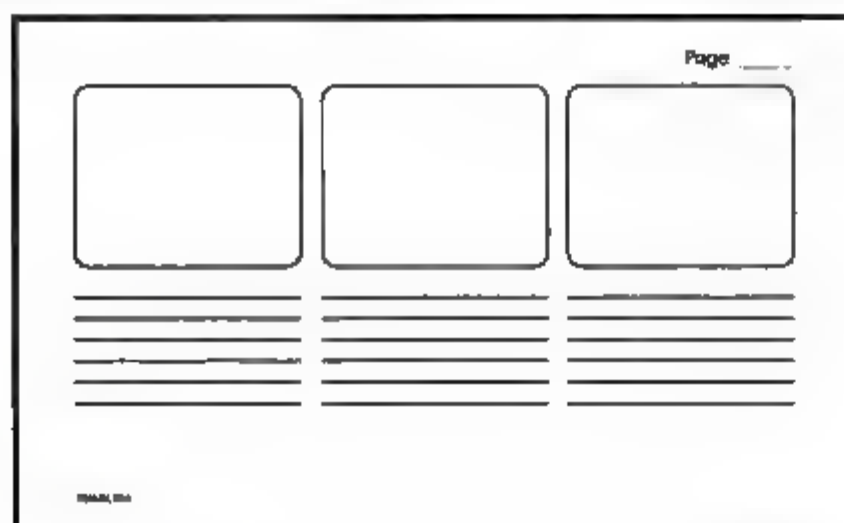
COMIC BOOK COVER SHEETS

These Comic Book Cover Sheets, show a border for your drawing with pre-marked bleeds for trimming with an area for the possible placement for the book's logo and company information clearly marked. This helps to keep all of the important elements of the covers from being covered up when the book logo and company info are placed later. They are 12 pages of 2-ply premium Brite art index board that come bagged and feature non-photo blue ink. Page size is 11" x 17" with an image area of 10 3/4" x 16".

- **ITEM# BL1007 SRP \$9.95**

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" art pages printed with a 10 3/4" x 16" non-photo blue border printed/ bagged.



STORYBOARD TEMPLATES

Animators and Storyboard artist! Blue Line Storyboard Templates offers animators and writers a quick and easy way to show movement and sequences of a story or animation.

Storyboard Templates have three large panels with lines below each for detailed art and storytelling.

- ITEM# BL1018 **SRP \$13.95**

100 sheets of 60 lb. 8 1/2 x 14 pages with 3 panels padded with colored cover.

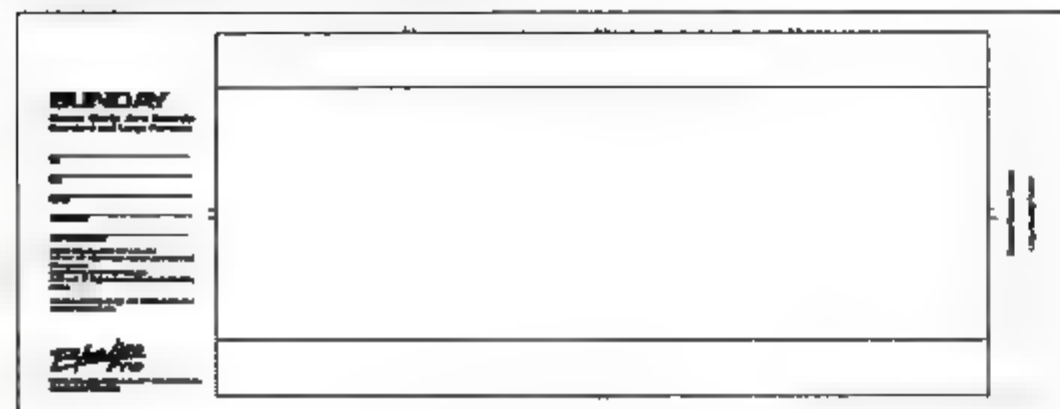


COMIC STRIP ART BOARDS

Blue Line Pro COMIC STRIP ART BOARDS offer comic strip illustrators an easy and time saving way to create professional looking comic strips. Printed on Blue Line Pro's Premiere (Strathmore) 300 series smooth with a non-photo blue border. Daily comic strip borders measure 4 1/16" x 13". This offers the illustrator the ability to reduce the original at a 44% reduction to the standard daily strip size. Sunday comic strip borders have two sizes: the first is a large format of 5 3/8" x 11 1/2" and the second format of 3 3/4" x 11 1/2". The Sunday strips are drawn at the size they are published and usual have two rows of panels. Each strip offers basic border formats for four and three panels and Sundays allow for additional rows.

BLP COMIC STRIP ART BOARDS 12 Daily Comic Strips and 2 Sunday Comic Strips.

- ITEM # BL1052 **SRP \$12.95**



POCKET SKETCH PAD

50 pages of heavy illustration board to carry around in your pocket to have ready when your hit with a revolutionary vision. Great for quick sketches and designs. Featuring Blue Line's quality illustration paper.

Great for pencilling, inking and washes.

50 pages / 5" x 9 1/2" / padded / two-color cover

- Item # BL1051 **SRP \$5.95**



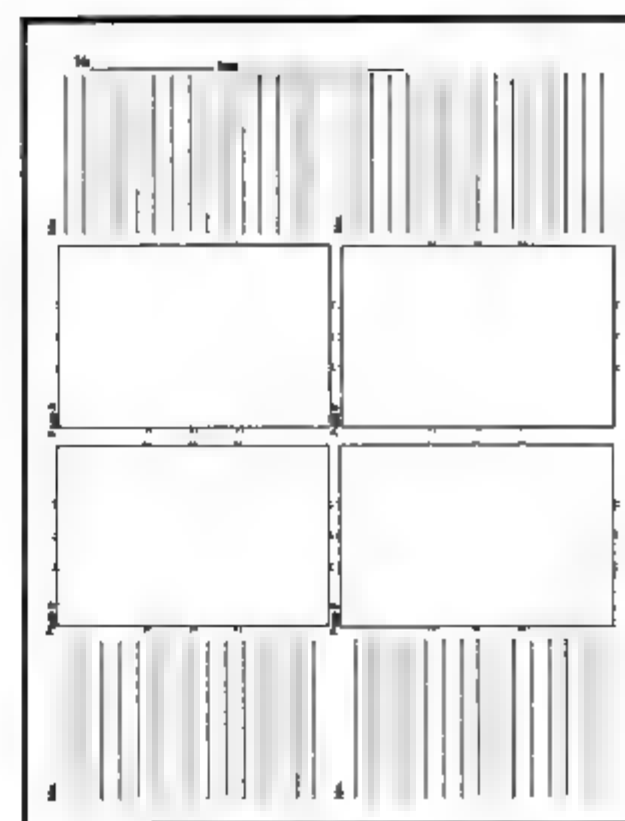
LAYOUT PAGES

Comic Book Layout Pages uses premium bond paper and printed in non-photo blue, of course, features markings to layout four thumbnails per sheet to detail your comic book page ideas and room for notations and other information.

Used for story boarding your comic book story. A great tool for artists or writers to work out details for the story along with layouts of pages.

- ITEM# BL1005 **SRP \$8.95**

30 8 1/2" x 11" pages printed in non-photo blue/ bagged.



CONCEPT SKETCH PAGES



CONCEPT SKETCH PAGES

Record and organize your creative ideas on a convenient, quality art board. Concept Sketch Pages are made from premium index board featuring non-photo blue ink so that the artist can ink his illustrations on a non-repro surface. Concept Sketch Pages offer an image area for an illustrator to draw a character scene or anything. And, it also gives room for written information to be included with the artwork. This is handy when a character is designed for a comic book and you want to include his bio, powers, etc., or a Role Playing character you're playing.

These pages can easily be hole punched and inserted into a binder. A character template is even included for quick and easy character creations!

- ITEM# BL1004 **SRP \$8.95**

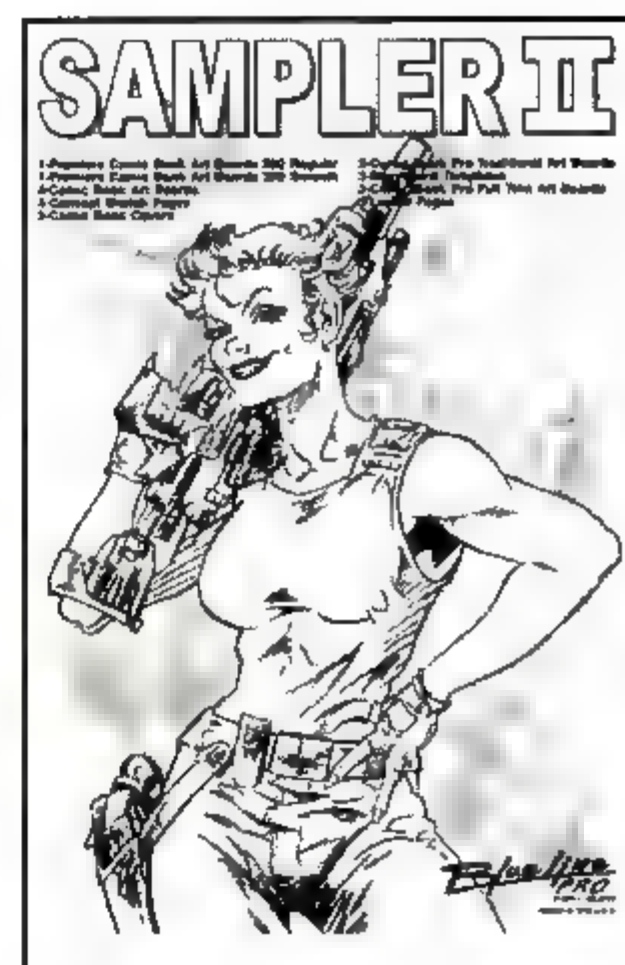
25 art pages printed in non-photo blue/ bagged.

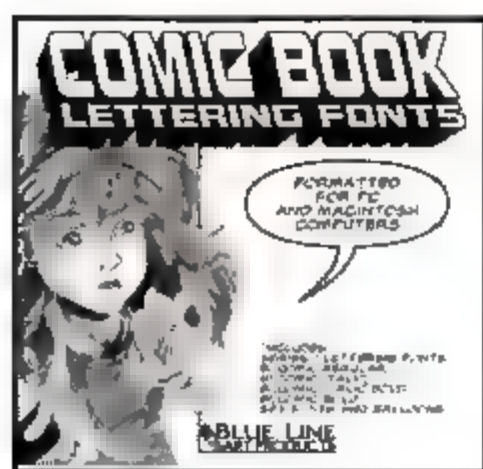
BLUE LINE SAMPLER II

If you haven't tried Blue Line products, here's your chance! The Blue Line Sampler includes 4-Comic Book Pages, 4-Concept Sketch Pages, 3-Comic Book Cover Sheets, 3- Layout Pages, 3-Pro Comic Book Pages, 3-Storyboard Templates, 3-Full Bleed Pro C.B. Pages, 1- Strathmore 300 smooth, 1- Strathmore 300 regular. All in non-photo blue, of course! That's 25 pages of five different Blue Line products! Check out all Blue Line and Blue Line Pro products in one fell swoop!

- ITEM# BL1040 **SRP \$13.95**

25 pages of 8 different Blue Line products. 4-Comic Book Pages, 4-Concept Sketch Pages, 3-Comic Book Cover Sheets, 3- Layout Pages, 3-Pro Comic Book Pages, 3-Storyboard Templates, 3-Full Bleed Pro C.B. Pages, 1- Strathmore 300 smooth, 1- Strathmore 300 regular. 25 pages per pack.





BLCOMIC FONT:
 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 1234567890

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 1234567890

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 1234567890

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 1234567890

BLUE LINE COMIC BOOK LETTERING FONT SERIES 1

Blue Line now offers creators an inexpensive lettering font.

BLCOMIC font is formatted for Macintosh and PC Compatibles in a TrueType format. BLSFX is a special effects font with pre-created sound effects that are ready for you to drop into place.

Also included is user configurable word balloons in .eps format.

ITEM# BL1019 SRP \$19.95

Includes: BLCOMIC font (Regular, Bold, Italic, Italic Bold). BLSFX font and configurable word balloons.

3 1/2 disk PC and Mac. format.



CREATE YOUR OWN COMIC BOOK!

Blue Line has developed a simple and inexpensive step by step to create your very first comic book, that's fun, easy and comprehensive. A box set of Blue Line products that aid a person in making their own comic! It includes 1 Character Template, 6 Concept Sketch Pages, 6 Comic Book Layout Pages, 24 Comic Book Pages, 1 Comic Book Cover Sheet and a 24 page instructional comic book.



- ITEM# BL1002 SRP \$21.95

Box Set. 37 art pages / 24 page b&w instructional comic book / full color die cut box / shrink wrapped.

SKETCH BOOK SERIES

Blue Line offers two different sizes of Sketch Books. A Regular 8 1/2" x 11" size and the Traditional 11" x 17" size both are filled with 200 pages of 70 lb. art paper. Both have hard covers with library quality stitch binding for durability and makes it easier to draw without an art table.

SKETCH BOOK REGULAR (8 1/2" x 11")

This standard sized hard covered book offers anyone with the ability to pick up a pencil the opportunity to draw. An artist could create their own library of sketches. Great for when you don't want to carry a sketch board around or your just sitting around with your friends.

Also a good way to collect artist signatures and sketches at conventions!

- Item #BL1010 / 200 pg. Hard cover book. SRP \$24.95

SKETCH BOOK TRADITIONAL (11" x 17")

This Sketch Book offers the artist the ability to draw the size they're going to draw their original comic book pages.

- Item #BL1011 / 200 pg. Hard cover book. SRP \$27.95

BLUE LINE: A GUIDE TO THE COMIC BOOK BUSINESS

Every fan who reads comics has at one time or another felt the urge to join in on the fun, to take a more active role, to become a player instead of a spectator. In short, to create. You have the desire, now you need a plan.

That's where Blue Line's A Guide To The Comic Book Business comes in. It covers all of the basics for starting and maintaining a successful career in the comic book industry. It doesn't matter if your skills lie in penciling or management, this book tells you what to do to turn your hobby into a paid profession.

The first chapter gets you up-to-date on how the industry is set up. It gives you the basic information necessary to be a knowledgeable participant in the comics field. Now that you're seated, we serve the appetizers - how to go about creating your own comics. After you've digested this important info, it's time for the main course. You'll discover proven methods for making yourself an outstanding candidate. Then, we take a look at other jobs in the industry outside of the creative aspect for all of you wannabe corporate types. For a side dish, chapter five deals with that small but growing niche of the industry - the small press and self-publisher. Finally, dessert. We clue you in on effective ways to advertise and promote your work so that you can actually make money off of your talents.

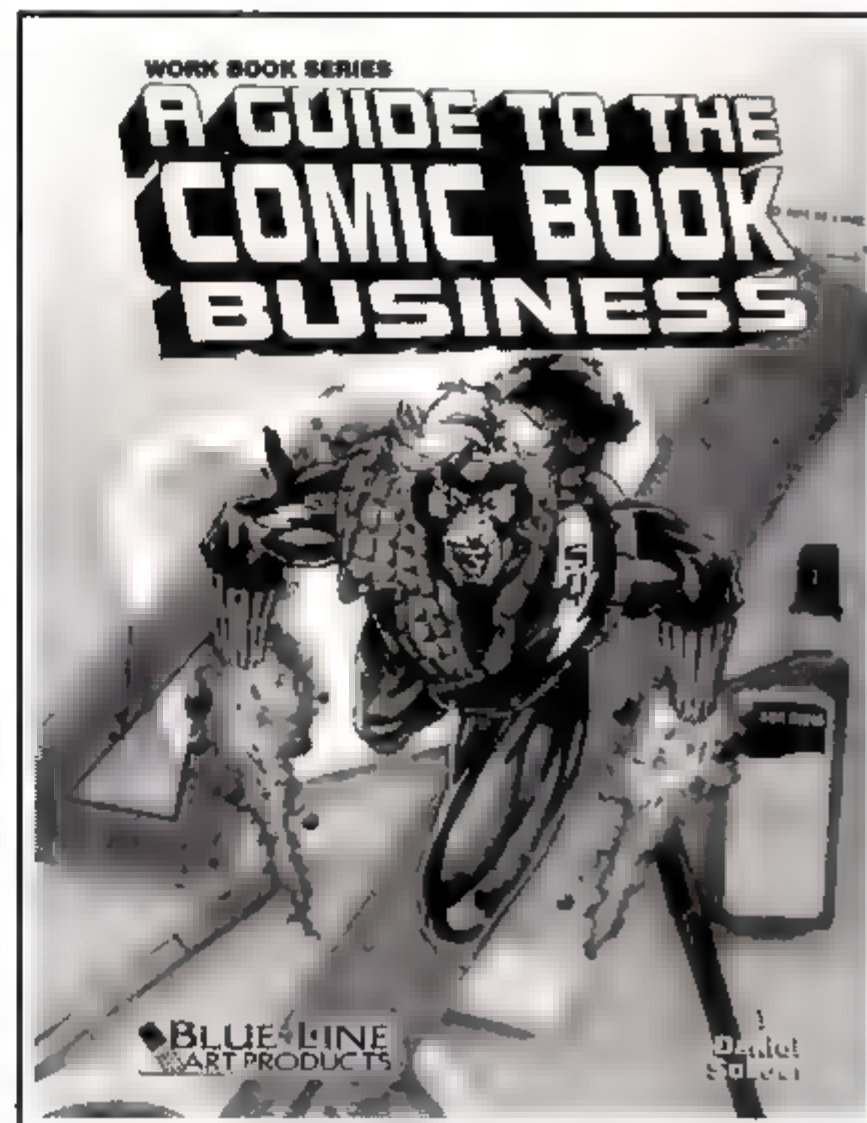
So, for everyone who's ever dreamed of being on the other side of the table at a comic convention, doodled more in class notebooks than actually taking notes, this book is for you.

Forward by Beau Smith Executive Director of Publishing for McFarlane Productions

Written by Daniel Souder. Edited by Bob Hickey

- ITEM# BL1039 SRP \$17.95

90 pages / b&w with full color cover. Spiral bound.



INDIA INK

• Higgins Black India Ink

A non-clogging ink for lettering pens and brushes. Opaque semi-gloss black finish and waterproof.

-AR-4415 Black Ink

(Higgins) 1oz. \$3.00

-AR-EF44011 Black Magic Ink (Higgins)

1oz. \$3.50
Higgins Waterproof Black Magic Ink is non-corrosive, free-flowing, and non-clogging. Great for use on tracing vellum and other film surfaces



• Pelikan Drawing Ink

One of the finest drawing ink available, Pelikan ink is great with technical pens, graphic and fine art papers or tracing cloth.

-AR-PE211862 Black India Ink (Pelikan)

1oz. \$4.75

-AR-PE211169 Black India Ink (Pelikan)

8oz. \$18.75

• Pelikan "T" Ink

Permanent and completely waterproof. Good with matte-surfaces or waterproof tracing cloth.

-AR-PE221374 Black Ink Pelikan "T"

1oz. \$6.00

• KOH-I-NOOR RAPIDOGGRAPH INK

Rapidograph Ink, Black, opaque ink for drafting film, paper, and tracing cloth. For use with Koh-I-Noor Rapidograph Pens.

-AR-3084-FI Koh-I-Noor Ink

\$3.95

• WHITE OUT

FW Acrylic Artist Waterproof White Ink. Great for use with technical pens, brushes, and dip pens.

-AR-FW-O11 FW White Acrylic Artist Ink

\$5.00



BRUSHES

• Winsor/Newton Series 7

Made with Kolinsky sable with traditional black handle. Great brush.

-AR-5007001 Winsor/Newton Series 7

Size#1 \$18.95

-AR-5007002 Winsor/Newton Series 7

Size#2 \$22.95

Round Brushes

Made with natural Sable with excellent edges and points for precise strokes.

-AR-NB-38-0 Round Brush Size #0

\$3.00

-AR-NB-38-1 Round Brush Size #1

\$3.25

-AR-NB-38-2 Round Brush Size #2

\$3.95

-AR-056009016 Round Brush Size#3

\$3.95



ERASERS

• Kneaded Eraser

Gray soft bendable eraser used for pencil and charcoal.

-AR-1224 Kneaded Rubber Eraser Large

\$1.15

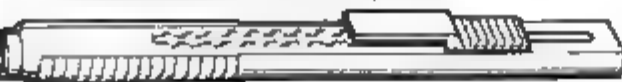


• Eraser Pencils

Peel off wrap ideal for detail erasing.

-AR-400 Eraser Pencils

\$1.15



• Pentel Clic

Pen style holder, retract as needed.

-AR-ZE-21C Pentel Clic Eraser/Holder

\$1.95

-AR-ZER-2 Pentel Refill Erasers

\$1.75

• Erasing Shield

Metal shield with different sizes and shapes.

-AR-FT-5370 Erasing Shield

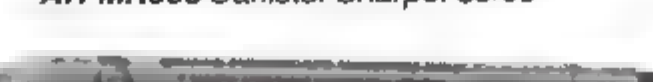
\$1.10

PENCIL SHARPENER

Canister Sharpener offers metal blades with high impact plastic container.

-AR-MR906 Canister Sharpener

\$3.95



• ALVIN PENSTIX

Graphic waterproof drawing pen offering India Ink density. Black permanent drawing ink.

-AR-4013-EEF 0.3mm

\$1.55

-AR-4017-F 0.7mm

\$1.55

-AR-4015-EF 0.5mm

\$1.55

• Pentstix Set

Includes all 3 Pentstix Sizes

-AR-4033 .3mm, .7mm, .5mm

\$4.45

• Pentstix Drawing/Sketching Markers

Offers maximum India drawing ink like density. Black waterproof permanent ink.

-AR-3013-EEF 0.3mm ExEx Fine

\$1.55

-AR-3015-EF 0.5mm Ex Fine

\$1.55

-AR-3017-F 0.7mm Fine

\$1.55

• Pentstix Drawing/Sketching Marker Set

Set of all 3 sizes.

-AR-3033 Set of 3 .3, .5, .7mm

\$4.45

SAKURA PIGMA BRUSH

Archival performance with flexible brush style nib. Very fine lines or broad strokes. Water/chem. proof + fade resistant.

-AR-XSDK-BR-49 Black

\$3.00

ALVIN DRAWING PEN/MARKERS

• Tech-Liner Super Point Drawing Pen/Markers

Permanent waterproof ink that dries instantly. Nibs set in stainless steel sleeves for protection.

-AR-TL01 0.1mm

\$1.95

-AR-TL02 0.2mm

\$1.95

-AR-TL03 0.3mm

\$1.95

-AR-TL04 0.4mm

\$1.95

-AR-TL05 0.5mm

\$1.95

Tech-Liner Super Point Drawing Pen/Markers Sets

-AR-TLP5 set of 5 (all sizes above)

\$9.50

-AR-TLP3 set of 3 (.1, .3, .5mm)

\$5.75

KOH-I-NOOR RAPIDOGGRAPH PENS

Rapidograph Pens are made of impact and chemical-resistant components for drawing and specialty inks. Good balance and self-polishing stainless steel points.

-AR-3165-06/0 Tech Pen Size 6x0

(13mm) \$27.00

-AR-3165-04/0 Tech Pen Size 4x0

(18mm) \$27.00



-AR-3165-03/0 Tech Pen Size 3x0

(.25mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-02/0 Tech Pen Size 2x0

(3mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-01/0 Tech Pen Size #0

(.35mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-01 Tech Pen Size #1

(5mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-02 Tech Pen Size #2

(.6mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-03 Tech Pen Size #3

(8mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-04 Tech Pen Size #4

(1mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-06 Tech Pen Size #6

(14mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-07 Tech Pen Size #7

(2mm) \$22.00



MECHANICAL PENCIL

Berol Mechanical Pencil is precision made w/button lead release and light aluminum barrel.

• Mechanical Pencil 2mm.

-AR-BP10C \$6.95

• 12-Pencil Leads- 2mm. HB

-AR-BP2375-HB \$10.50

• 12-Pencil Leads- 2mm. 2H

-AR-BP2375-2H \$10.50

• 12-Pencil Leads- 2mm. 2B

-AR-SA02263-2B \$10.50

• 12-Non-Photo Blue Leads-2mm.

-AR-BP2376-NPB \$10.50

• Mechanical Pencil Sharpener

Provides professional point for standard leads

-AR-BP14C Pencil Sharpener

(Mech. Pencil) \$10.75



PRISMACOLOR MARKERS

• Prismacolor Singles

Unique four in one design creates four line widths from one double-ended marker. Extra broad nibs imitates paint brush stroke while fine and thin nibs achieve gentle refined strokes.

All Colors are available!

• All Singles \$3.30

• Metallic: single nib

-AR-PM117 (Broad) Metallic Silver

-AR-PM118 (Fine) Metallic Silver

-AR-PM119 (Broad) Metallic Gold

-AR-PM120 (Fine) Metallic Gold

• All Metallic Singles \$3.30

PRISMACOLOR SETS

• Primary/Secondary 12-Set

Includes: AR-PM: 50, 19, 15, 57, 6, 4, 32, 44, 53, 31, 61, and 9.

-AR-BP12N \$40.00

• Cool Grey 12-set

-AR-BP12P \$40.00

• Warm Grey 12-set

-AR-BP12Q \$40.00

• French Grey 12-set

-AR-BP12R \$40.00

• Prismacolor 24 set

-AR-BP24S \$79.25

• Prismacolor 48 set

-AR-BP48S \$158.50

• Prismacolor 72 set

-AR-BP72S \$238.00

• Prismacolor 120 set

-AR-BP120S \$394.00

• Prismacolor 144 set

-AR-BP144S \$470.00

• Empty Studio Marker Stacker

-AR-STUDIO \$18.00

• Prismacolor 24 set w/hard carrying case

-AR-BP24C \$90.00

• Prismacolor 48 set w/hard carrying case

-AR-BP48C \$170.00

All Colors are available!

- AR-PM1 Process Red
- AR-PM4 Crimson Red
- AR-PM5 Scarlet Lake
- AR-PM6 Carmine Red
- AR-PM7 Magenta
- AR-PM8 Pink
- AR-PM10 Blush Pink
- AR-PM11 Deco Pink
- AR-PM12 Light Pink
- AR-PM13 Poppy Red
- AR-PM14 Pale Vermilion
- AR-PM15 Yellowed Orange
- AR-PM16 Orange
- AR-PM17 Sunburst Yellow
- AR-PM18 Yellow Ochre
- AR-PM19 Canary Yellow
- AR-PM21 Tulip Yellow
- AR-PM23 Cream
- AR-PM24 Yellow Chartreuse
- AR-PM25 Spring Green
- AR-PM26 Lt. Olive Green
- AR-PM27 Chartreuse
- AR-PM28 Olive Green
- AR-PM31 Dark Green
- AR-PM32 Parrot Green
- AR-PM33 Hunter Green
- AR-PM36 Lime Green
- AR-PM37 Aquemarine
- AR-PM38 Teal Blue
- AR-PM39 True Blue
- AR-PM40 Copenhagen Blue
- AR-PM42 Violet Blue
- AR-PM43 Indigo Blue
- AR-PM44 Ultramarine
- AR-PM45 Navy Blue
- AR-PM46 Light Aqua
- AR-PM47 Non-photo Blue
- AR-PM48 Lt. Cerulean Blue
- AR-PM50 Violet
- AR-PM51 Black Grape
- AR-PM53 Mulberry
- AR-PM55 Rhodamine
- AR-PM59 Lavender
- AR-PM60 Violet Mist
- AR-PM61 Dark Umber
- AR-PM62 Sepia
- AR-PM65 Sienna Brown
- AR-PM69 Goldenrod
- AR-PM70 Sand
- AR-PM71 Buff
- AR-PM72 Eggshell
- AR-PM73 Flagstone Red
- AR-PM78 Brick Beige
- AR-PM79 Brick White
- AR-PM80 Putty
- AR-PM82 Terra Cotta
- AR-PM86 Cherry
- AR-PM88 Dark Brown
- AR-PM89 Light Walnut
- AR-PM90 Walnut
- AR-PM93 Burnt Ochre
- AR-PM95 Light Tan
- AR-PM96 Blond Wood
- AR-PM97 Warm Black
- AR-PM98 Black

You must purchase a minimum of 12 single marker each time you order.

- AR-PM99 Warm Grey 10%
- AR-PM100 Warm Grey 20%
- AR-PM101 Warm Grey 30%
- AR-PM102 Warm Grey 40%
- AR-PM103 Warm Grey 50%
- AR-PM104 Warm Grey 60%
- AR-PM105 Warm Grey 70%
- AR-PM106 Warm Grey 80%
- AR-PM107 Warm Grey 90%
- AR-PM108 Cool Grey 10%
- AR-PM109 Cool Grey 20%
- AR-PM110 Cool Grey 30%
- AR-PM111 Cool Grey 40%
- AR-PM112 Cool Grey 50%
- AR-PM113 Cool Grey 60%
- AR-PM114 Cool Grey 70%
- AR-PM115 Cool Grey 80%
- AR-PM116 Cool Grey 90%
- AR-PM122 Salmon Pink
- AR-PM123 Spanish Orange
- AR-PM124 Limepool
- AR-PM125 Peacock Blue
- AR-PM126 Cerulean Blue
- AR-PM127 Imperial Violet
- AR-PM128 Parma Violet
- AR-PM129 Dahlia Purple
- AR-PM130 Deco Orange
- AR-PM131 Deco Yellow
- AR-PM132 Jasmine
- AR-PM133 Deco Pink
- AR-PM134 Deco Blue
- AR-PM135 Deco Green
- AR-PM136 Deco Aqua
- AR-PM137 Clay Rose
- AR-PM138 Pink Rose
- AR-PM140 Celadon Green
- AR-PM141 Jade Green
- AR-PM142 Brittany Blue
- AR-PM143 Mediterranean Blue
- AR-PM144 Cloud Blue
- AR-PM145 Blue Slate
- AR-PM146 Periwinkle
- AR-PM147 Greyed Lavender
- AR-PM148 Cornflower
- AR-PM149 Bronze
- AR-PM150 Mahogany Red
- AR-PM151 Raspberry
- AR-PM152 Henna
- AR-PM153 Pumpkin Orange
- AR-PM154 Mineral Orange
- AR-PM155 French Grey 10%
- AR-PM156 French Grey 20%
- AR-PM157 French Grey 30%
- AR-PM158 French Grey 40%
- AR-PM159 French Grey 50%
- AR-PM160 French Grey 60%
- AR-PM161 French Grey 70%
- AR-PM162 French Grey 80%
- AR-PM163 French Grey 90%
- AR-PM164 Peacock Green
- AR-PM165 Grass Green
- AR-PM166 True Green
- AR-PM167 Apple Green
- AR-PM168 Dark Purple
- AR-PM169 Tuscan Red
- AR-PM170 Peach
- AR-PM171 Lilac
- AR-PM172 Light Umber
- AR-PM173 Light Violet
- AR-PM184 Forest Green
- AR-PM185 Spruce
- AR-PM186 Emerald
- AR-PM187 Leaf Green
- AR-PM190 Tangerine
- All Single Markers \$3.30

You must purchase a minimum of 12 single marker each time you order.

RULERS

- **Stainless Steel Rulers** offering flexible steel with non-skid cork backing.
 - AR-200-12 Steel Ruler 12 inch Cork Backing \$5.95
 - AR-200-18 Steel Ruler 18 inch Cork Backing \$6.95
- **Plastic Ruler** 1 inch with 1/16" markings and metric markings.
 - AR-C36 Ruler 12" (plastic ruler) \$1.25
 - AR-18 Ruler 6" (plastic ruler) \$.50



• SHARPIE MARKERS

- Permanent markers with high intensity ink. Quick drying
- AR-SA37101 Ultra Fine Black \$1.30
 - AR-SA35101 Extra Fine Black \$1.30
 - AR-SA30101 Regular Black \$1.30
 - AR-SA33101 Super Sharpie \$1.95



• METALLIC PENS

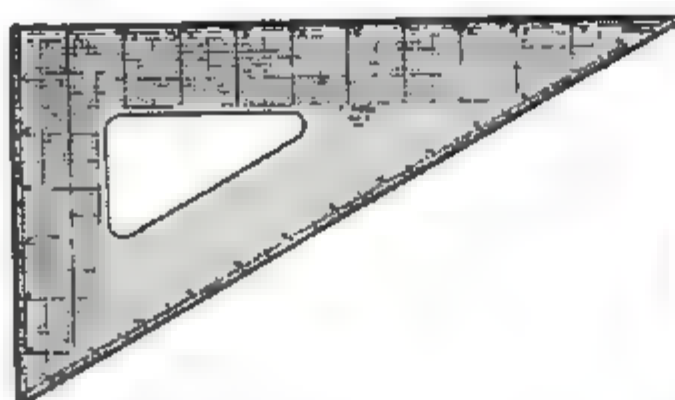
- Offers high quality metallic ink. Great for autographs.
- AR-SA46115 Gold Pen \$4.50
 - AR-SA46120 Silver Pen \$4.50

• CHINA MARKING PENCILS

- Offers moisture resistant, non-toxic odor-free pigments. Self Sharpening. Offered as a dozen or singles.
- AR-173T Dozen Black \$10.75
 - AR-173T-1 Single Black \$.95
 - AR-164T Dozen White \$10.75
 - AR-164T-1 Single White \$.95

T-SQUARES

- **Plastic T-squares** offering flexible plastic with both metric and standard measurements
 - AR-HX02 Plastic 12" \$3.95
 - AR-NBA18 Plastic 18" \$7.95
 - AR-NBA24 Plastic 24" \$10.95
- **Aluminum T-squares** offering hard tempered aluminum blade riveted to a rugged plastic head
 - AR-FR63-112 Aluminum 12" \$10.95
 - AR-FR63-118 Aluminum 18" \$12.95
 - AR-FR63-124 Aluminum 24" \$13.95



TRIANGLES

- High quality triangles made of .080" acrylic. Raised inking edges. Great for inkers.
- **30" x 60" W/ Inking Edge**
 - AR-1204-60 Triangle 30"x60" 4 inch \$3.50
 - AR-1206-60 Triangle 30"x60" 6 inch \$4.50
 - AR-1208-60 Triangle 30"x60" 8 inch \$5.50
 - AR-1210-60 Triangle 30"x60" 10 inch \$6.50
 - AR-1212-60 Triangle 30"x60" 12 inch \$8.50
 - **45" X 90" W/ Inking Edge**
 - AR-1204-45 Triangle 45"x90" 4 inch \$4.50
 - AR-1206-45 Triangle 45"x90" 6 inch \$5.50
 - AR-1208-45 Triangle 45"x90" 8 inch \$7.50
 - AR-1210-45 Triangle 45"x90" 10 inch \$9.50
 - AR-1212-45 Triangle 45"x90" 12 inch \$13.50

COMPASS SET

- Geometry set includes ruler, compass, two triangles, protractor, eraser, and sharpener
- **8-piece Geometry Set**
 - AR-HX18807 \$4.95
 - **8-Piece Geometry Set (brass compass)**
 - AR-723405 \$7.95

• Basic Geometry Set

- 4-piece Geometry Set (Ruler, 12" protractor, 30/60 + 45/90 triangles)

- AR-FL03 \$5.95

• Basic Combination Compass

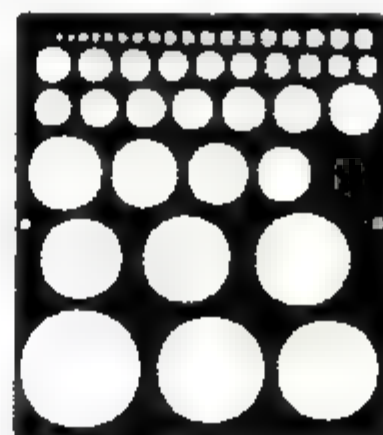
- 6-piece compass set: side-screw bow compass, knee joint compass, extension bar, spare leads, 2" divider point and a lead pointer.

- AR-S61 Set \$15.95

• Compass Set

- 6-piece drawing set contains: Small side screw compass, 5 1/2" self-centering knee joint compass/divider, extension bar, technical pen adapter, divider point and lead pointer.

- ARHLX01330-01330 Set \$16.95

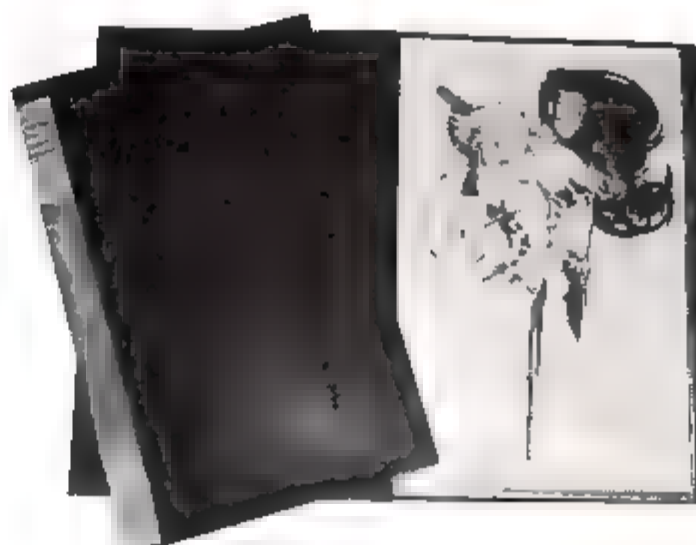


CIRCLE TEMPLATES / FRENCH CURVES

- **Circle Templates**

Metric and standard. Risers for smear-free drawing. (Great for inkers)

 - **Large Circles**
 - AR-13001 \$7.95
 - **Extra Large Circles**
 - AR-13011 \$6.95
- **French Curves (Inking Edge)**
 - AR-9000 Set \$6.95
- **Ellipse Temps.**
 - AR-PK12691 \$12.00



DISPLAY PORTFOLIOS

• ARTFOLIOS

- 24 pages of acid, pvc, and legnen safe art sleeves. Archival Safe.
- AR-IA1212 Artfolio Book 11 x 17 w/ 24 sheets \$15.95
(Holds Blue Line Comic Book Art Boards)
 - AR-IA 1214 Artfolio book 14 x 17 w/ 24 sheets \$25.95
(Holds most oversized art boards)

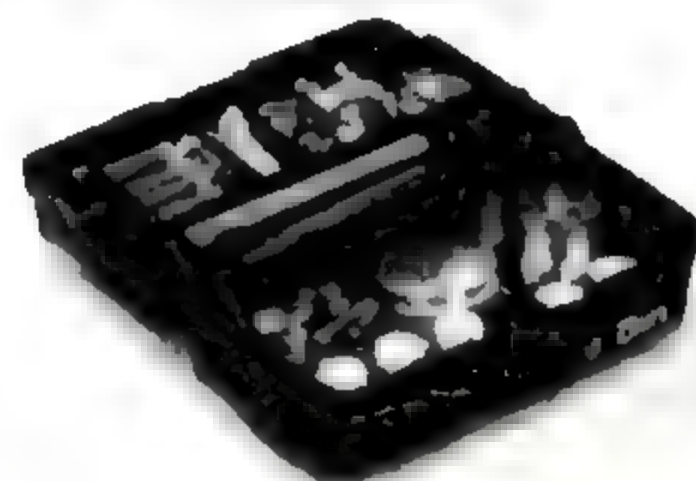
• POCKET PORTFOLIO

- AR-FL419WH Pocket Portfolio 14 x 20



STORAGE BOXES

- **Sketch Pac** 2-sided safe storing box 12 3/8" x 4 1/4" x 1 3/4"
- AR-6880AB \$12.95



- **One Tray Art Bins** 13" x 7 1/4" x 5 3/4", Elevated tray for viewing of supplies in bottom bin. Tight Latch
- AR-6843AC black \$15.25

• DRAFTSMAN BRUSH

- Removes shavings from paper. Cleaning without fear of smudging.
- **Draftsman Brush (cleaning paper)**
 - AR-FT5391 \$6.00



XACTO KNIFE

- Rubberized barrel. Rear-release mechanism with safety cap.

- **Xacto Knife**
 - AR-XA3626 \$5.25
- **Xacto Refill Blades #1**
 - AR-OLKB \$6.50

WORKABLE FIXATIF (Krylon)

- Provides lasting protection. Prevents smudging, dusting and wrinkling.
- **Workable Fixatif**
 - AR-KR1306 \$8.95



RUBBER CEMENT

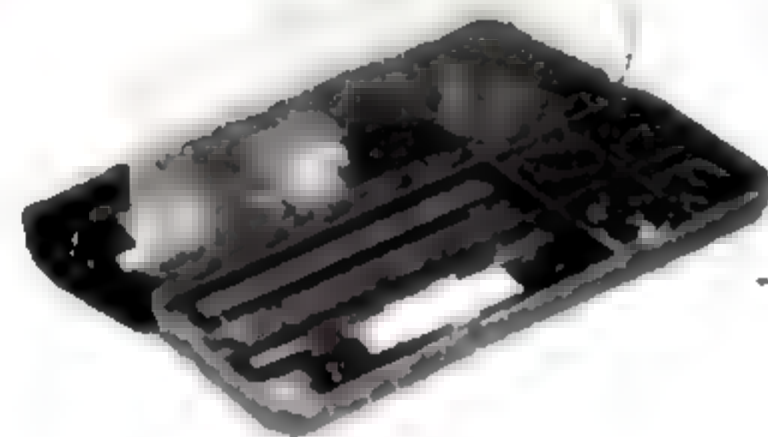
- Contact adhesive for paste-up and other graphic art uses.

- **Rubber Cement 4oz.**
 - AR-BT138 \$3.50
- **Rubber Cement Quart**
 - AR-BT102 \$13.25
- **Rubber Cement Thinner Pint**
 - AR-BT201 \$8.50
- **Rubber Cement Pick-Up (eraser)**
 - AR-BT700 \$1.50



COMIC BOOK ORIGINAL ART SLEEVES

- Protect your original Art Work
- **Comic Book Original Art Sleeves** 11 1/2" x 19" Polyethylene (3.0 mil.)
 - AR-BAG 1119-25 25 Bags \$7.50
 - AR-BAG 1119-100 100 Bag \$25.00



COPIC MARKERS, AIR MARKERS, TONES, REFILLS

COPIC Markers have been widely used in Europe and Asia where their coloring qualities go hand in hand with the style we know as manga. Their versatility and variety lends itself to the imagination of the creator and gives him or her options for their creative style. The standard square designed COPIC marker is double-ended and fast drying. COPICs have been specially formulated with a toner designed not to dissolve making them able to work directly onto photocopied surfaces and provide clear unblemished color. One of the best parts about COPIC markers is their refillable ink and replaceable nib features.

• Single Copic Markers \$4.95 each

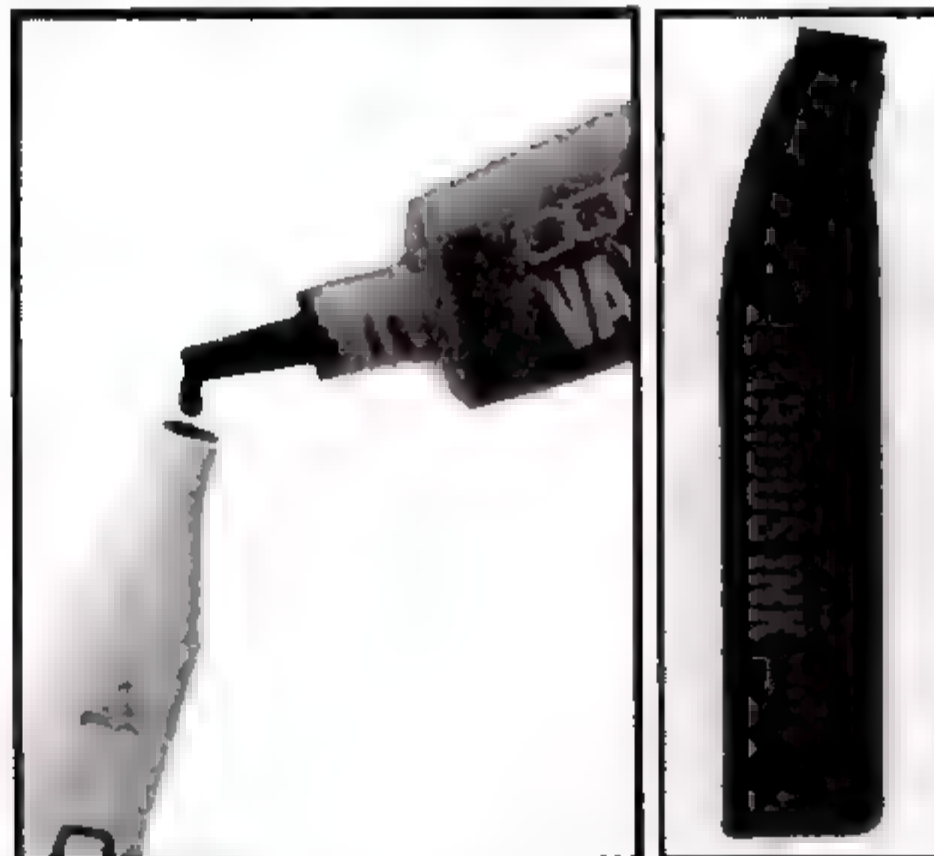
100B45 Smokey Blue
100BG02 New Blue
100BG05 Holiday Blue
100BG09 Blue Green
100BG10 Cool Shadow
100BG11 Moon White
100BG13 Mint Green
100BG15 Aqua
100BG18 Teal Blue
100BG32 Aqua Mint
100BG34 Horizon Green
100BG45 Nile Blue
100BG49 Duck Blue
100BG99 Fragstone Blue
100BV00 Mauve Shadow
100BV04 Blue Berry
100BV08 Blue Violet
100BV23 Grayish Lavender
100BV31 Pale Lavender
100C0 Cool Gray 0
100C1 Cool Gray 1
100C10 Cool Gray 10
100C2 Cool Gray 2
100C3 Cool Gray 3
100C4 Cool Gray 4
100C5 Cool Gray 5
100C6 Cool Gray 6
100C7 Cool Gray 7
100C8 Cool Gray 8
100C9 Cool Gray 9
100E00 Skin White
100E02 Fruit Pink
100E04 Lipstick Natural
100E07 Light Mahogany
100E09 Burnt Sienna
100E11 Bareley Beige
100E13 Light Suntan
100E15 Dark Suntan
100E19 Redwood
100E21 Baby Skin Pink
100E25 Caribe Cocoa
100E27 Africano
100E29 Burnt Umber
100E31 Brick Beige
100E33 Sand
100E34 Orientale
100E35 Chamois
100E37 Sepia
100E39 Leather
100E40 Brick White
100E41 Pearl White
100E43 Dull Ivory
100E44 Clay
100E49 Dark Bark
100E51 Milky White
100E53 Raw Silk
100E55 Light Camel
100E57 Light Walnut
100E59 Walnut
100E77 Maroon
100G00 Jade Green
100G02 Spectrum Green
100G05 Emerald Green
100G07 Nile Green
100G09 Veronese Green
100G12 Sea Green
100G14 Apple Green
100G16 Malachite
100G17 Forest Green
100G19 Bright Parrot Green
100G20 Wax White
100G21 Lime Green
100G24 Willow
100G28 Ocean Green
100G29 Pine Tree Green
100G40 Dim Green
100G82 Spring Dim Green
100G85 Verdigris
100G99 Olive
100N0 Neutral Gray 0
100N1 Neutral Gray 1
100N10 Neutral Gray 10
100N2 Neutral Gray 2
100N3 Neutral Gray 3
100N4 Neutral Gray 4
100N5 Neutral Gray 5
100N6 Neutral Gray 6
100N7 Neutral Gray 7
100N8 Neutral Gray 8
100N9 Neutral Gray 9
100R00 Pinkish White
100R02 Flesh
100R05 Salmon Red
100R08 Vermilion
100R11 Pale Cherry Pink
100R17 Lipstick Orange
100R20 Blush
100R24 Prawn
100R27 Cadmium Red
100R29 Lipstick Red
100R32 Peach
100R35 Coral

100R37 Carmine
100R39 Garnet
100R59 Cardinal
100RV02 Sugared Almond Pink
100RV04 Shock Pink
100RV06 Carise
100RV09 Fuchsia
100RV10 Pale Pink
100RV11 Pink
100RV13 Tender Pink
100RV14 Begonia Pink
100RV17 Deep Magenta
100RV19 Red Violet
100RV21 Light Pink
100RV25 Dog Rose Flower
100RV29 Crimson
100RV32 Shadow Pink
100RV34 Dark Pink
100T0 Toner Gray 0
100T1 Toner Gray 1
100T10 Toner Gray 10
100T2 Toner Gray 2
100T3 Toner Gray 3
100T4 Toner Gray 4
100T5 Toner Gray 5
100T6 Toner Gray 6
100T7 Toner Gray 7
100T8 Toner Gray 8
100T9 Toner Gray 9
100V04 Lilac
100V06 Lavender
100V09 Violet
100V12 Pale Lilac
100V15 Mallow
100V17 Amethyst
100W0 Warm Gray 0
100W1 Warm Gray 1
100W10 Warm Gray 10
100W2 Warm Gray 2
100W3 Warm Gray 3
100W4 Warm Gray 4
100W5 Warm Gray 5
100W6 Warm Gray 6
100W7 Warm Gray 7
100W8 Warm Gray 8
100W9 Warm Gray 9
100Y00 Barium Yellow
100Y02 Canary Yellow
100Y06 Yellow
100Y08 Acid Yellow
100Y11 Pale Yellow
100Y13 Lemon Yellow
100Y15 Cadmium Yellow
100Y17 Golden Yellow
100Y19 Napoli Yellow
100Y21 Buttercup Yellow
100Y23 Yellowish Beige
100Y26 Mustard
100Y38 Honey
100YG01 Green Bice
100YG03 Yellow Green
100YG05 Salad
100YG07 Acid Green
100YG09 Lettuce Green
100YG11 Mignonette
100YG13 Chartreuse
100YG17 Grass Green
100YG21 Anise
100YG23 New Leaf
100YG25 Celadon Green
100YG41 Pale Green
100YG45 Cobalt Green
100YG63 Pea Green
100YG67 Moss
100YG91 Putty
100YG95 Pale Olive
100YG97 Spanish Olive
100YG99 Marine Green
100YR00 Powder Pink
100YR02 Light Orange
100YR04 Chrome Orange
100YR07 Cadmium Orange
100YR09 Chinese Orange
100YR14 Caramel
100YR16 Apricot
100YR18 Sanguine
100YR21 Creme
100YR23 Yellow Ochre
100YR24 Pale Sepia
• COPIC MARKER SETS
110 COPIC 12 Basic \$59.40
112 COPIC 12 PCS NG \$59.40
114 COPIC 12 PCS TG \$59.40
116 COPIC 12 PCS WG \$59.40
118 COPIC 12 PCS CG \$59.40
120 COPIC 36 Color Set \$178.20
140 Copic 72 Color Set A \$356.40
150 Copic 72 Color Set B \$356.40
155 Copic 72 Color Set C \$356.40
160 Copic Empty Marker \$3.60
• COPIC Various Ink (Refills) \$4.95
200100 Black
200110 Special Black
200B00 Frost Blue
200B000 Pale Porcelain Blue

200B01 Mint Blue
200B02 Robin's Egg Blue
200B04 Tahitian Blue
200B05 Process Blue
200B06 Peacock Blue
200B12 Ice Blue
200B14 Light Blue
200B16 Cyanine Blue
200B18 Lapis Lazuli
200B21 Baby Blue
200B23 Phthalo Blue
200B24 Sky
200B26 Cobalt Blue
200B28 Royal Blue
200B29 Ultramarine
200B32 Pale Blue
200B34 Manganese Blue
200B37 Antwerp Blue
200B39 Prussian Blue
200B41 Powder Blue
200B45 Smoky Blue
200B52 Soft Greenish Blue
200B60 Pale Blue Gray
200B63 Light Hydrangea
200B79 Iris
200B91 Pale Grayish Blue
200B93 Light Crockery Blue
200B95 Light Grayish Cobalt
200B97 Night Blue
200B99 Agate
200BG01 Aqua Blue
200BG02 New Blue
200BG05 Holiday Blue
200BG07 Petroleum Blue
200BG09 Blue Green
200BG10 Cool Shadow
200BG11 Moon White
200BG13 Mint Green
200BG15 Aqua
200BG18 Tea Blue
200BG23 Coral Sea
200BG32 Aqua Mint
200BG34 Horizon Green
200BG45 Nile Blue
200BG49 Duck Blue
200BG93 Green Gray
200BG96 Bush
200BG99 Fragstone Blue
200BV00 Mauve Shadow
200BV000 Iridescent Mauve
200BV02 Prune
200BV04 Blue Berry
200BV08 Blue Violet
200BV11 Soft Violet
200BV13 Hydrangea Blue
200BV17 Deep Reddish Blue
200BV20 Dull Lavender
200BV23 Grayish Lavender
200BV25 Grayish Violet
200BV29 Slate
200BV31 Pale Lavender
200C0 Cool Gray
200C1 Cool Gray 1
200C10 Cool Gray 10
200C2 Cool Gray 2
200C3 Cool Gray 3
200C4 Cool Gray 4
200C5 Cool Gray 5
200C6 Cool Gray 6
200C7 Cool Gray 7
200C8 Cool Gray 8
200C9 Cool Gray 9

200E00 Skin White
200E000 Pale Fruit Pink
200E01 Fruit Flamingo
200E02 Fruit Pink
200E04 Lipstick Natural
200E07 Light Mahogany
200E08 Brown
200E09 Burnt Sienna
200E11 Bareley Beige
200E13 Light Suntan
200E15 Dark Suntan
200E19 Redwood
200E21 Baby Skin Pink
200E25 Caribe Cocoa
200E27 Africano
200E29 Burnt Umber
200E31 Brick Beige
200E33 Sand
200E34 Orientale
200E35 Chamois
200E37 Sepia
200E39 Leather
200E40 Brick White
200E41 Pearl White
200E43 Dull Ivory
200E44 Clay
200E47 Dark Brown
200E49 Dark Bark
200E50 Egg Shell
200E51 Milky White
200E53 Raw Silk
200E55 Light Camel
200E57 Light Walnut
200E59 Walnut
200E71 Champagne
200E74 Cocoa Brown
200E77 Maroon
200E79 Cashew
200E93 Tea Rose
200E95 Flesh Pink
200E97 Deep Orange
200E99 Baked Clay
200FB2 Fluorescent Dull Blue
200FBG2 Fluorescent Dull Blue Green
200FRV1 Fluorescent Pink
200FV2 Fluorescent Dull Violet
200FY1 Fluorescent Yellow Orange
200FYG1 Fluorescent Yellow
200FYG2 Fluorescent Dull Yellow Green
200FYR1 Fluorescent Orange
200G00 Jade Green
200G02 Spectrum Green
200G05 Emerald Green
200G07 Nile Green
200G09 Veronese Green
200G12 Sea Green
200G14 Apple Green
200G16 Malachite
200G17 Forest Green
200G19 Bright Parrot Green
200G20 Wax White
200G21 Lime Green
200G24 Willow
200G28 Ocean Green
200G29 Pine Tree Green
200G40 Dim Green
200G82 Spring Dim Green
200G85 Verdigris
200G94 Grayish Olive
200G99 Olive

200N0 Neutra, Gray
200N1 Neutral Gray 1
200N10 Neutral Gray 10
200N2 Neutral Gray 2
200N3 Neutral Gray 3
200N4 Neutral Gray 4
200N5 Neutral Gray 5
200N6 Neutra, Gray 6
200N7 Neutra, Gray 7
200N8 Neutra, Gray 8
200N9 Neutral Gray 9
200R00 Pinkish White
200R000 Cherry White
200R02 Flesh
200R05 Salmon Red
200R08 Vermilion
200R11 Pale Cherry White
200R12 Light Rose Tea
200R14 Light Rouse
200R17 Lipstick Orange
200R20 Blush
200R22 Light Prawn
200R24 Prawn
200R27 Cadmium Red
200R29 Lipstick Red
200R30 Pale Yellowish Pink
200R32 Peach
200R35 Coral
200R37 Carmine
200R39 Garnet
200R43 Bougainvillea
200R46 Strong Red
200R59 Cardinal
200RV02 Sugared Almond Pink
200RV04 Shock Pink
200RV06 Carise
200RV09 Fuchsia
200RV10 Pale Pink
200RV11 Pink
200RV13 Tender Pink
200RV14 Begonia Pink
200RV17 Deep Magenta
200RV19 Red Violet
200RV21 Light Pink
200RV23 Pure Pink
200RV25 Dog Rose Flower
200RV29 Crimson
200RV32 Shadow Pink
200RV34 Dark Pink
200RV42 Salmon Pink
200T0 Toner Gray
200T1 Toner Gray 1
200T10 Toner Gray 10
200T2 Toner Gray 2
200T3 Toner Gray 3
200T4 Toner Gray 4
200T5 Toner Gray 5
200T6 Toner Gray 6
200T7 Toner Gray 7
200T8 Toner Gray 8
200T9 Toner Gray 9
200V01 Health
200V04 Lilac
200V05 Marigold
200V06 Lavender
200V09 Violet
200V12 Pale Lilac
200V15 Mallow
200V17 Amethyst
200V91 Pale Grape
200V95 Light Grape
200V99 Aubergine
200W0 Warm Gray
200W1 Warm Gray 1
200W10 Warm Gray 10
200W2 Warm Gray 2
200W3 Warm Gray 3
200W4 Warm Gray 4
200W5 Warm Gray 5
200W6 Warm Gray 6
200W7 Warm Gray 7
200W8 Warm Gray 8
200W9 Warm Gray 9
200Y00 Barium Yellow
200Y02 Canary Yellow
200Y04 Acacia
200Y06 Yellow
200Y08 Acid Yellow
200Y11 Pale Yellow
200Y13 Lemon Yellow
200Y15 Cadmium Yellow
200Y17 Golden Yellow
200Y19 Napoli Yellow
200Y21 Buttercup Yellow
200Y23 Yellowish Beige
200Y26 Mustard
200Y28 Lionet Gold
200Y32 Cashmere
200Y35 Maize
200Y38 Honey
200YG00 Mimosa Yellow
200YG01 Green Bice
200YG03 Yellow Green
200YG05 Salad
200YG06 Yellowish Green
200YG07 Acid Green
200YG09 Lettuce Green
200YG11 Mignonette
200YG13 Chartreuse
200YG17 Grass Green
200YG21 Anise



200 SERIES: One of the best parts about COPIC markers standard and sketch is their refillable ink feature. No more tossing out dried out markers. Just fill it back up again and you're ready to go. Refills can be used up six times. This refillable feature gives you the opportunity to make your own color through mixing inks, creating an original color all your own.

You must purchase a minimum of 12 single marker each time you order.

200YG23 New Leaf
200YG25 Celadon Green
200YG41 Pale Green
200YG45 Cobalt Green
200YG63 Pea Green
200YG67 Moss
200YG91 Putty
200YG93 Grayish Yellow
200YG95 Pale Olive
200YG97 Spanish Olive
200YG99 Marine Green
200YR00 Powder Pink
200YR000 Silk
200YR02 Light Orange
200YR04 Chrome Orange
200YR07 Cadmium Orange
200YR09 Chinese Orange
200YR14 Caramel
200YR16 Apricot
200YR18 Sanguine
200YR20 Yellowish Shade
200YR21 Cream
200YR23 Yellow Ochre
200YR24 Pale Sepia
200YR31 Light Reddish Yellow
200YR61 Yellowish Skin Pink
200YR65 Atoll
200YR68 Orange

Colorless Blender



210 Various Ink Colorless Blender \$3.75
220 Various Colorless Blender 200c \$9.75
230 Various Ink Empty Bottle \$2.65



• Replacable Marker Nibs \$4.20

Another great feature about Copic markers is their interchangeable nibs. From broad to calligraphy provide greater freedom of technique in your renderings. Copic Nibs deliver clear vibrant color on photocopied surfaces as well as glass plastics and metals. The nibs are made of strong but flexible polyester for smooth consistent application. Nibs come in a pack of 10 except for the brush variety that comes in a pack of 3.

300 Standard Broad
310 Soft Broad
320 Round
330 Calligraphy 5mm
340 Brush
350 Standard Fine
360 Super Fine
370 Semi Broad
380 Calligraphy 3mm
385 Sketch Nib Super Brush
390 Sketch Nib Medium Broad



400 Copic Tweezer \$4.20

Our special Copic Tweezers give you an easy no-mess nib change that gets you drawing again in minutes. Being able to change nibs quickly helps you keep up with the most demanding marker techniques.

• Copic SKETCH MARKERS

The oval designed Sketch Copic marker is double-ended and is fast drying. Copic's have been specially formulated with a toner designed not to dissolve making them able to work directly onto photocopied surfaces and provide clear unblemished color. Copic Sketch markers oval body profile gives you a feel of a fast flowing experience in your

hands. It paints as well as it draws. They come with a broad nib and a brush like nib, available in medium + broad and super brush making them great for delicate or bold expression (from fashion and graphics to textiles and fine arts lettering/calligraphy). Copic sketch markers are available in 286 colors. One of the best parts about Copic markers is their refillable ink and replaceable nib features.

450 Colorless Blender \$4.20
45100 Black \$4.20
45110 Special Black \$4.20
452 Sketch 12 Basic Set \$59.40
454 Sketch 36 Basic Set \$178.20
456 Sketch 72 set A \$356.40
458 Sketch 72 Set B \$356.40

• Single Copic SKETCH Markers \$4.95

45B00 Frost Blue
45B000 Pale Porcelain Blue
45B01 Mint Blue
45B02 Robins Egg Blue
45B04 Tahitian Blue
45B05 Process Blue
45B06 Peacock Blue
45B12 Ice Blue
45B14 Light Blue
45B16 Cyanine \$4.95
45B18 Lapis Lazuli
45B21 Baby Blue
45B23 Phthalic Blue
45B24 Sky
45B26 Cobalt Blue
45B28 Royal Blue
45B29 Lila Marine
45B32 Pale Blue
45B34 Manganese Blue
45B37 Antwerp Blue
45B39 Prussian Blue
45B41 Powder Blue
45B45 Smokey Blue
45B52 Soft Greenish Blue
45B60 Pale Blue Gray
45B63 Light Hydrangea
45B79 Iris
45B91 Pale Grayish Blue
45B93 Light Crockery Blue
45B95 Light Grayish Cobalt
45B97 Night Blue
45B99 Agate
45BG01 Aqua Blue
45BG02 New Blue
45BG05 Holiday Blue
45BG07 Petrolium Blue
45BG09 Blue Green
45BG10 Cool Shadow
45BG11 Moon White
45BG13 Mint Green
45BG15 Aqua
45BG18 Tea Blue
45BG23 Coral Sea
45BG32 Aqua Mint
45BG34 Horizon Green
45BG45 Nile Blue
45BG49 Duck Blue
45BG93 Green
45BG96 Bush
45BG99 Fragstone Blue
45BV00 Malve Shadow
45BV000 Indescent Mauve
45BV02 Prune
45BV04 Blue Berry
45BV08 Blue Violet
45BV11 Soft Violet
45BV13 Hydrangea Blue
45BV17 Deep Reddish Blue
45BV20 Dull Lavender
45BV23 Grayish Lavender
45BV25 Grayish Violet
45BV29 Slate
45BV31 Pale Lavender
45C0 Cool Gray 0
45C1 Cool Gray 1
45C10 Cool Gray 10
45C2 Cool Gray 2
45C3 Cool Gray 3
45C4 Cool Gray 4
45C5 Cool Gray 5
45C6 Cool Gray 6
45C7 Cool Gray 7
45C8 Cool Gray 8
45C9 Cool Gray 9
45E00 Skin White
45E000 Pale Fruit Pink
45E01 Pink Flamingo
45E02 Fruit Pink
45E04 Lipstick Natural
45E07 Light Mahogany
45E08 Brown
45E09 Burnt Sienna
45E11 Barely Beige
45E13 Light Suntan
45E15 Dark Suntan
45E19 Redwood
45E21 Baby Skin Pink
45E25 Canbe Cocoa

45E27 Africano
45E29 Burnt Umber
45E31 Brick Beige
45E33 Sand
45E34 Orientale
45E35 Chamois
45E37 Sepia
45E39 Leather
45E40 Brick White
45E41 Pearl White
45E43 Dull Ivory
45E44 Clay
45E47 Dark Brown
45E49 Dark Bark
45E50 Eggshell
45E51 Milky White
45E53 Raw Silk
45E55 Light Camel
45E57 Light Walnut
45E59 Walnut
45E71 Champagne
45E74 Cocoa Brown
45E77 Maroon
45E79 Cashew
45E93 Tea Rose
45E95 Flesh Pink
45E97 Deep Orange
45E99 Baked Clay
45FB2 Fluorescent Dull Blue
45FBG2 Fluorescent Dull Blue Green
45FRV1 Fluorescent Pink
45FV2 Fluorescent Dull Violet
45FY1 Fluorescent Yellow
45FYG1 Fluorescent Yellow Green
45FYG2 Fluorescent Dull Yellow Green
45FYR1 Fluorescent Orange
45G00 Jade Green
45G02 Spectrum Green
45G05 Emerald Green
45G07 Nile Green
45G09 Veronese Green
45G12 Sea Green
45G14 Apple Green
45G16 Malachite
45G17 Forest Green
45G19 Bright Parrot Green
45G20 Wax White
45G21 Lime Green
45G24 Willow
45G28 Ocean Green
45G29 Pine Tree Green
45G40 Dim Green
45G82 Spring Dim Green
45G85 Verdigris
45G94 Grayish Olive
45G99 Olive
45N0 Neutral Gray 0
45N1 Neutral Gray 1
45N10 Neutral Gray 10
45N2 Neutral Gray 2
45N3 Neutral Gray 3
45N4 Neutral Gray 4
45N5 Neutral Gray 5
45N6 Neutral Gray 6
45N7 Neutral Gray 7
45N8 Neutral Gray 8
45N9 Neutral Gray 9
45R00 Pinkish White
45R000 Cherry White
45R02 Flesh
45R05 Salmon Red
45R08 Vermilion
45R11 Pale Cherry Pink
45R12 Light Tea Rose
45R14 Light Rouse
45R17 Lipstick Orange
45R20 Blush
45R22 Light Prawn
45R24 Prawn
45R27 Cadmium Red
45R29 Lipstick Red
45R30 Pale Yellowish Pink
45R32 Peach
45R35 Coral
45R37 Carmine
45R39 Garnet
45R43 Bougainvillea
45R46 Strong Red
45R59 Cardinal
45RV02 Sugared Almond Pink
45RV04 Shock Pink
45RV06 Cerise
45RV08 Fuchsia
45RV10 Pale Pink
45RV11 Pink
45RV13 Tender Pink
45RV14 Begonia Pink
45RV17 Deep Magenta
45RV19 Red Violet
45RV21 Light Pink
45RV23 Pure Pink
45RV25 Dog Rose Flower
45RV29 Crimson

45RV32 Shadow Pink
45RV34 Dark Pink
45RV42 Salmon Pink
45T0 Toner Gray 0
45T1 Toner Gray 1
45T10 Toner Gray 10
45T2 Toner Gray 2
45T3 Toner Gray 3
45T4 Toner Gray 4
45T5 Toner Gray 5
45T6 Toner Gray 6
45T7 Toner Gray 7
45T8 Toner Gray 8
45T9 Toner Gray 9
45V01 Heath
45V04 Lilac
45V05 Marigold
45V06 Lavender
45V09 Violet
45V12 Pale Lilac
45V15 Malow
45V17 Amethyst
45V91 Pale Grape
45V95 Light Grape
45V99 Aubergine
45W0 Warm Gray 0
45W1 Warm Gray 1
45W10 Warm Gray 10
45W2 Warm Gray 2
45W3 Warm Gray 3
45W4 Warm Gray 4
45W5 Warm Gray 5
45W6 Warm Gray 6
45W7 Warm Gray 8
45W8 Warm Gray 9
45W9 Barium Yellow
45Y00 Canary Yellow
45Y02 Acacia
45Y06 Yellow
45Y08 Acid Yellow
45Y11 Pale Yellow
45Y13 Lemon Yellow
45Y15 Cadmium Yellow
45Y17 Golden Yellow
45Y19 Napoli Yellow
45Y21 Buttercup Yellow
45Y23 Yellowish Beige
45Y26 Mustard

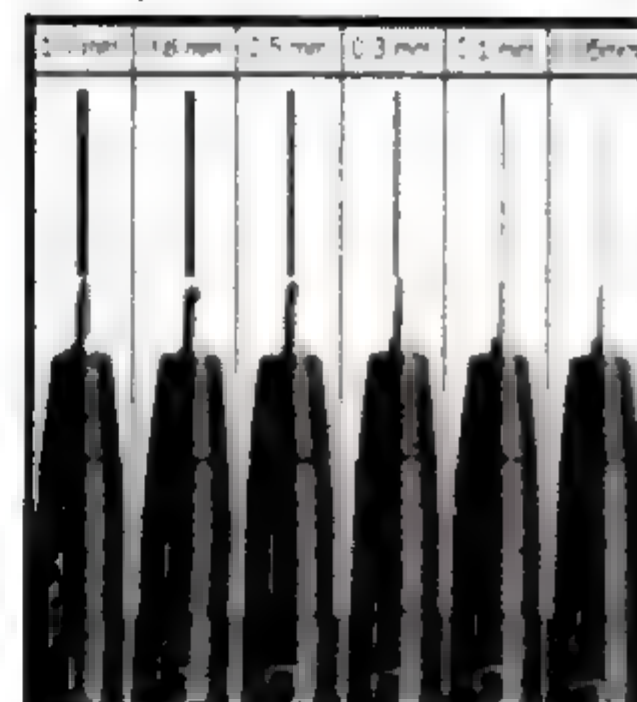
45Y28 Lionet Gold
45Y32 Cashmere
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45Y38 Honey
45YG00 Mimosa Yellow
45YG01 Green Bice
45YG03 Yellow Green
45YG05 Salad
45YG06 Yellowish Green
45YG07 Acid Green
45YG09 Lettuce Green
45YG11 Mignonette
45YG13 Chartreuse
45YG17 Grass Green
45YG21 Anise
45YG23 New Leaf
45YG25 Celadon Green
45YG41 Pale Green
45YG45 Cobalt Green
45YG63 Pea Green
45YG67 Moss
45YG91 Putty
45YG93 Grayish Yellow
45YG95 Pale Olive
45YG97 Spanish Olive
45YG99 Marine Green
45YR00 Powder Pink
45YR000 Silk
45YR02 Light Orange
45YR04 Chrome Orange
45YR07 Cadmium Orange
45YR09 Chinese Orange
45YR14 Caramel
45YR16 Apricot
45YR18 Sanguine
45YR20 Yellowish Shade
45YR21 Creme
45YR23 Yellow Ochre
45YR24 Pale Sepia
45YR31 Light Reddish Yellow
45YR61 Yellowish Skin Pink
45YR65 Atoll
45YR68 Orange
460 Sketch 72 Set C \$356.40
462 Sketch 72 Set D \$356.40



• 500 Copic Opaque White \$9.75

Copic Opaque White is a water based white pigment used for highlight effects. It won't bleed into the base color so it gives sharp line definition and can be used on watercolor as well as other permanent ink surfaces.

510 Copic Alcohol Marker Pad A4 \$9.95
520 Copic Alcohol Marker Pad B4 \$19.95
530 TOO Manga Manuscript Paper A4 \$6.95
540 TOO Manga Manuscript Paper B4 \$9.95
550 72 pc wire stand \$59.95
560 36 pc block stand \$29.95



• Copic's MULTI LINERS drawing pens allow drawing without annoying running ink. They are available in pens and brush. The pens come in a wide range of line widths (from .05 to 1.0 mm) while the brushes come in three different sizes: small medium and large.
600 Multiliner .05 \$2.50
610 Multiliner .01 \$2.50
620 Multiliner .03 \$2.50





630	Multiliner 0.5	\$2.50
640	Multiliner 0.8	\$2.50
650	Multiliner 1.0	\$2.50
660	Multiliner Brush M	\$2.95
670	Multiliner Brush S	\$2.95
671	Sepia, ML .05	\$2.50
672	Sepia, ML .1	\$2.50
673	Sepia ML .3	\$2.50
674	Grey ML .05	\$2.50
675	Grey ML .1	\$2.50
676	Grey ML .3	\$2.50
680	Multiliner Set A	\$15.00
690	Multiliner Set B	\$20.00



COPIC Air Marker

• 705 ABS-1 Kit \$60.95

ABS-1 Kit. COPIC Markers can be used as an airbrush by inserting the broad top end of the pen into our uniquely designed adapter. The Airbrush feature is wonderful for creating backgrounds and filling in larger areas of space. The Airbrush tool creates little or no mess and allows for nearly instant change in color. It's simple to use - just attach one end of the COPIC Airbrush hose to a standard airbrush compressor and the other to the COPIC Airbrush adapter and you're ready to go. A compressed air can that attaches directly to the COPIC Airbrush adapter is available for portability. This is the airbrush ABS-1 Kit. It comes with 1. Air Grip (where the pen goes in) 2. The air adapter (where the empty canister that the air grip screws on to. This canister is just a reservoir, it does not contain air) 3. The air hose (this connects from the bottom of the air adapter to the top of the air can) 4. The air can 80 5. The air can holder (a foam square with 3 holes in it so that you can stand the different sizes of air cans) This kit has all of the components in it for someone who would like to have portability but have to option to connect it to a compressor.

• 710 Starting Set ABS-2 \$26.50

Set ABS-2. COPIC Markers can be used as an airbrush by inserting the broad top end of the pen into our uniquely designed adapter. The Airbrush feature is wonderful for creating backgrounds and filling in larger areas of space. The Airbrush tool creates little or no mess and allows for nearly instant change in color. It's simple to use - just attach one end of the COPIC Airbrush hose to a standard airbrush compressor and the other to the COPIC Airbrush adapter and you're ready to go. A compressed air can that attaches directly to the COPIC Airbrush adapter is available for portability. This is the portable version of our airbrush system. The ABS-2 Kit comes with a D-60 can of compressed air and the Airgrip. This item is great for the artist on the move. ONLY the D-60 air can can be attached directly to the air grip because of some special tubing inside the can. The other sizes of air cans 80 and 180 have to be attached to the hose and then to the air adapter. They hold more air but are not so portable.

720	Starting Set ABS-3	\$28.50
730	Airgrip	\$17.10
740	Air Adapter	\$11.40
750	Air hose 1/4 to 1/8	\$21.50
755	Air hose 1/8 to 1/16	\$21.50
760	Air Can D-60	\$8.95
763	Air Can 80	\$10.95
765	Air Can 180	\$12.95
770	Air Compressor	\$186.50
910	NX Kit 2	\$15.00
915	Too Professional Tone	\$4.20
(See the website for over 20 different types and styles of tones.)		
95	Empty sketch marker	\$3.60

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Professional Art Pencil Sets
Soft lead, permanent pigments, blendable.
Water and smear resistant. No eraser.

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-ARSAN03596	\$13.95
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• 48 Color Pencil Set	
-ARSAN03598	\$51.95
• 72 Color Pencil Set	
-ARSAN03599	\$76.95
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-ARSAN03602	\$127.95



• 5" Bow Compass & Divider

An all metal construction compass with replaceable needle and lead. Makes accurate 8" diameter circles. Extra pivot point for use as a divider.

-AR-494 5" Bow Compass \$ 4.95



• 14 Piece Drafting Kit

Drafting Kit includes 12" architectural scale, 12x16 vinyl pouch, lettering guide pad, 6" compass, 6" divider, 10" 30/60 triangle, 8" 45/90 triangle, 6" protractor, 6 3/4 french curve, soft pencil eraser, lead holder, mini lead pointer, erasing shield and a three pack of 2.0mm lead.

-AR-BDK-1A 15 Piece Drafting Kit \$38.95



• Sandpaper Pointer

Ideal for pointing pencils, leads, charcoal and crayons by hand.

-AR-3435-1 Sandpaper Pointer \$ 95

MAGIC RUB
SANFORD 1954

• Magic-Rub Eraser

Eraser especially developed for sensitive surfaces, will not mark or smudge.

-AR-1954FC-1 Magic-Rub Eraser \$.95



• Blending Stumps

Soft paper felt with double pointed ends used for blending charcoal, pastels, etc. Use sandpaper to repoint.

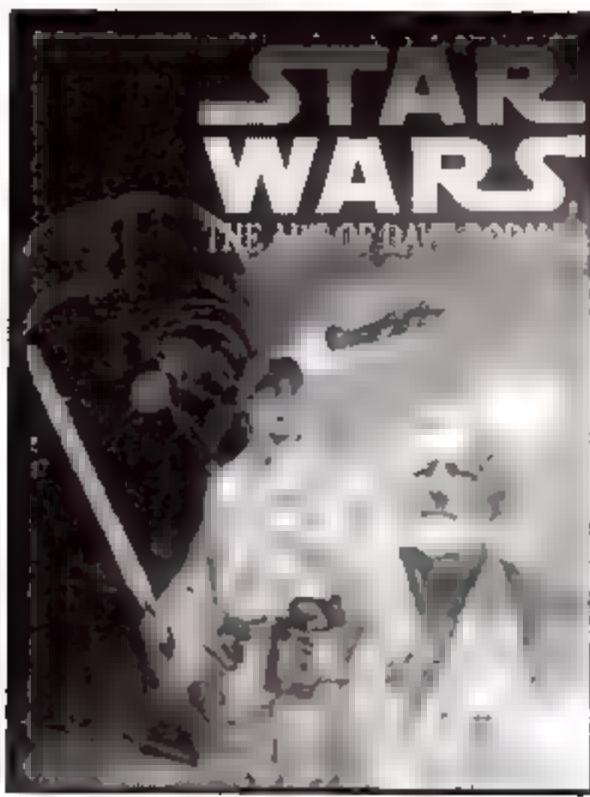
-AR-T811-1	1/4" x 5 1/4"	\$50
-AR-T812-1	5/16" x 6"	\$75
-AR-T813-1	13/32" x 6"	\$1.00
-AR-T814-1	15/32" x 6"	\$1.25
-AR-T817-1	5/8" x 6"	\$1.50

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-AR-XSK02-49	30mm, black	\$2.95
-AR-XSK03-49	.35mm, black	\$2.95
-AR-XSK05-49	45mm, black	\$2.95
-AR-XSK08-49	.50mm, black	\$2.95
-AR-30061	3-pk., 25, 35, 45mm	\$8.00
-AR-30062	All sizes, black	\$16.00





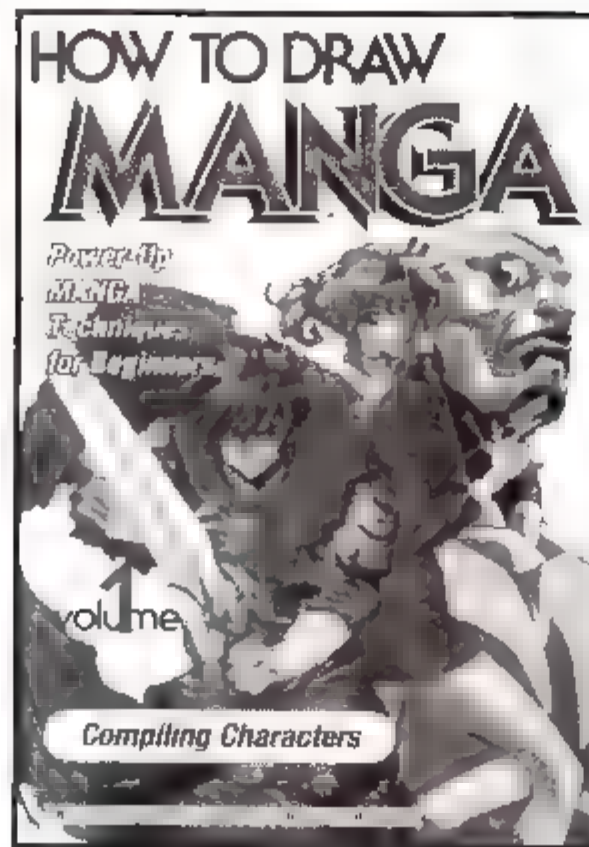
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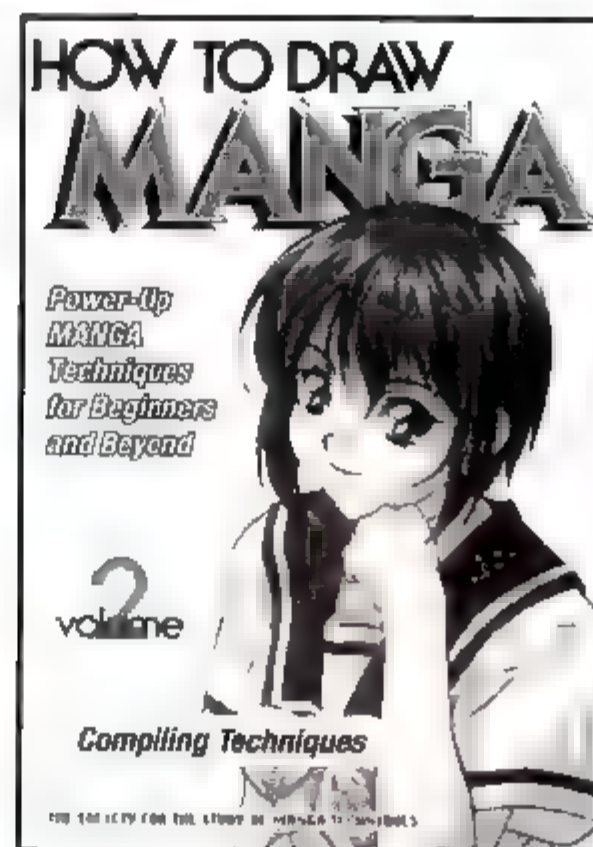


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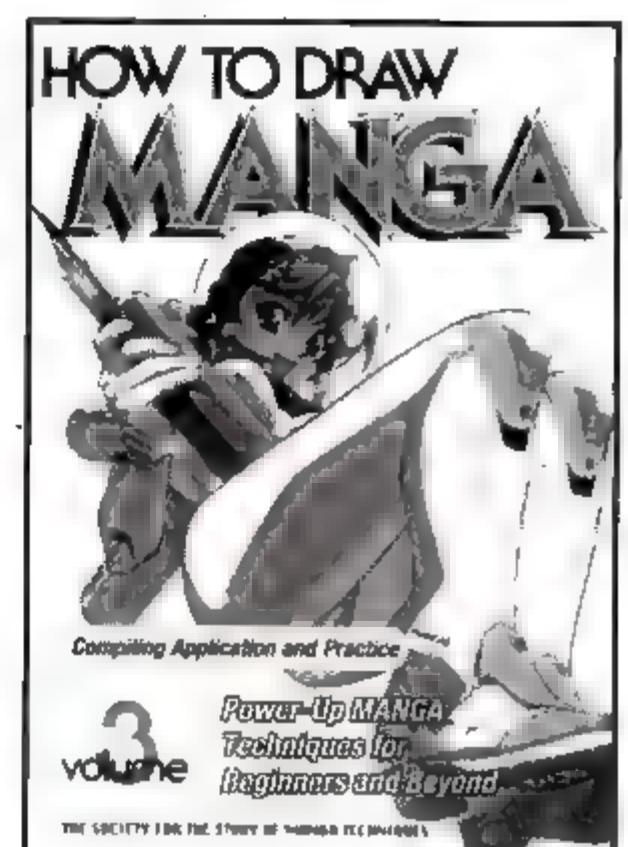


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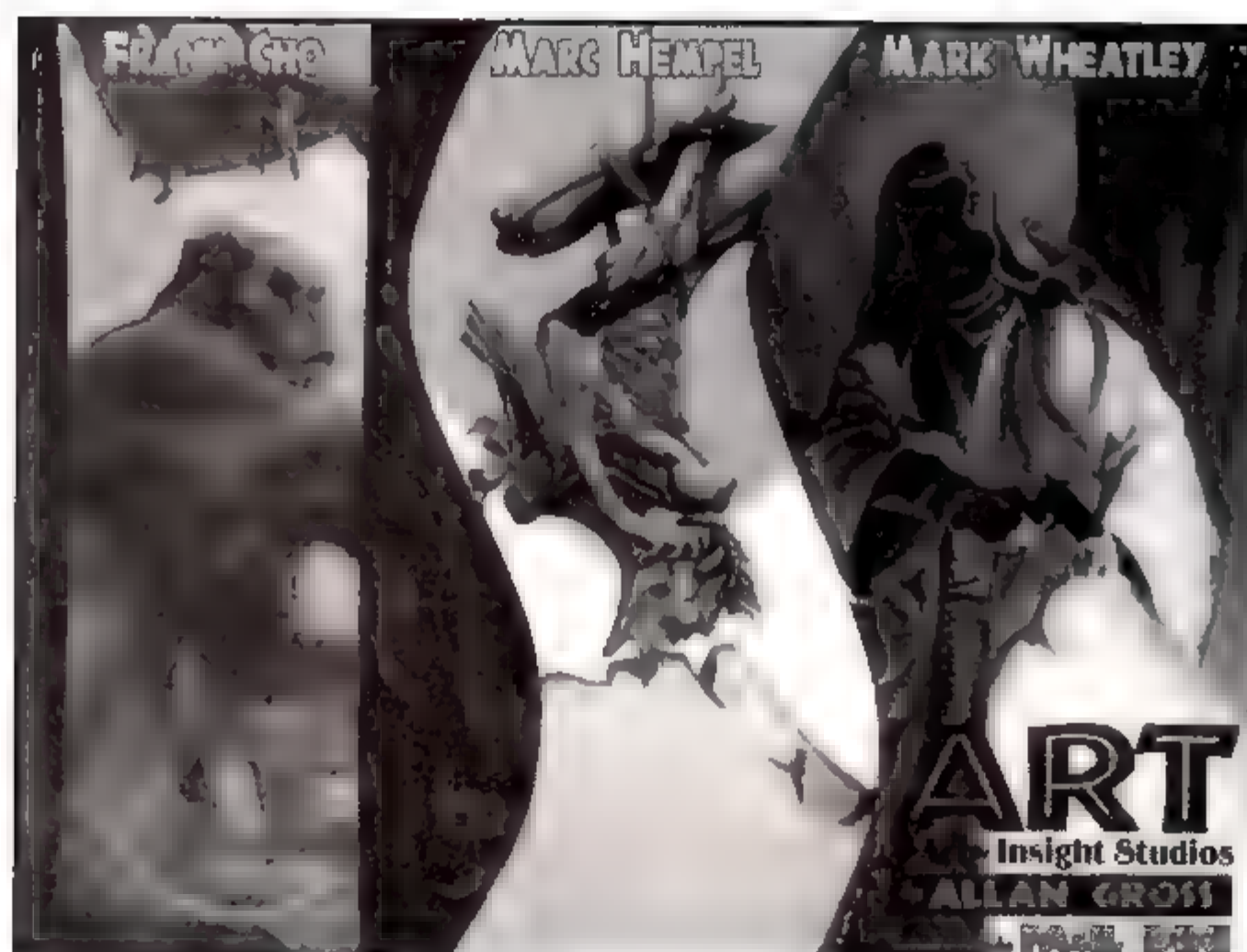
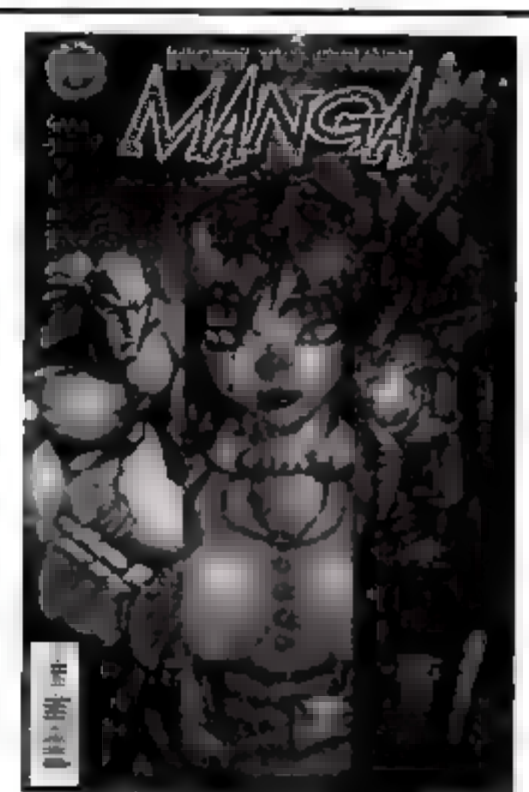


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comprehensive guide to figure drawing in manga style with lessons in anatomy,
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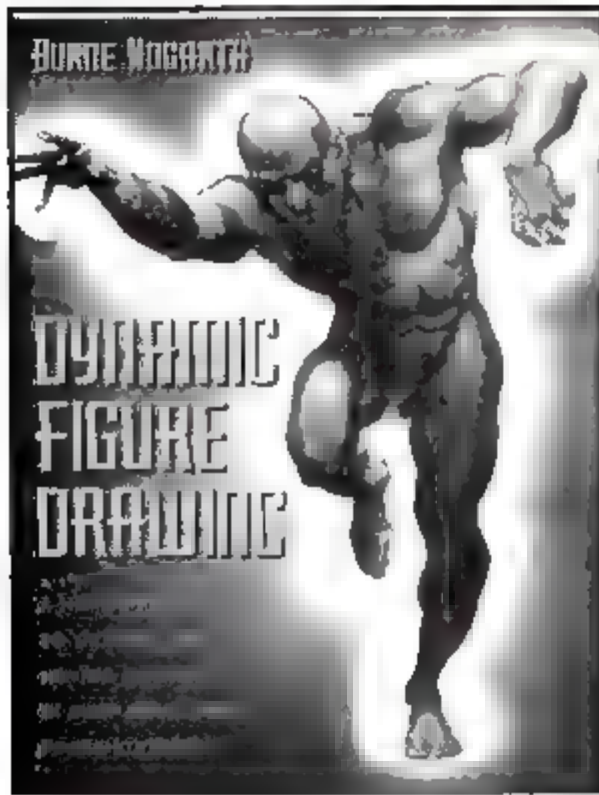
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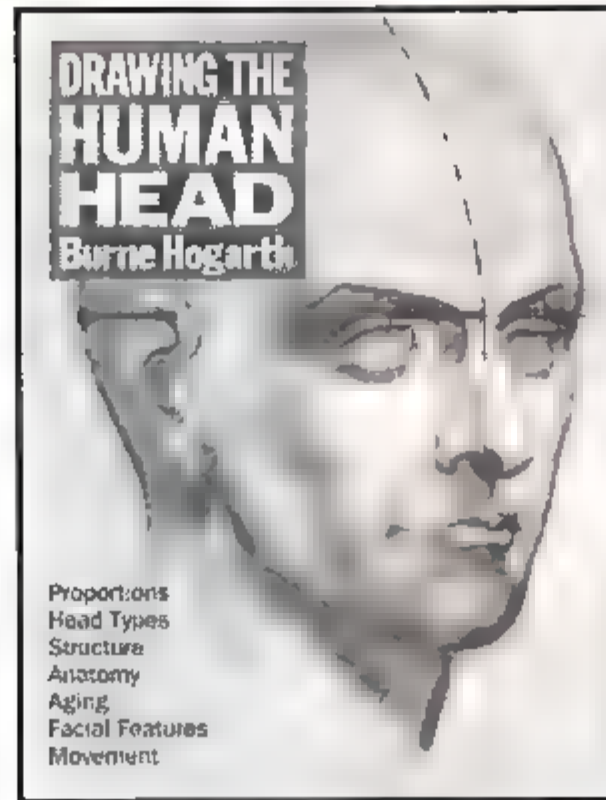
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Figure drawing is the most essential - and the most difficult - of all skills for the artist to learn. The hardest problem is to visualize the figure in the tremendous variety of poses which the body takes in action, poses which plunge the various forms for the body into deep space and show them in radical foreshortening.

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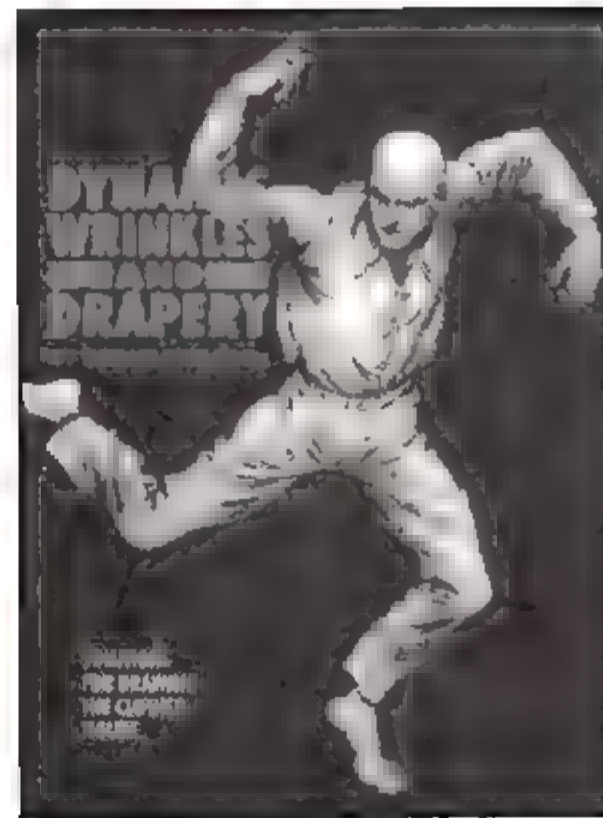
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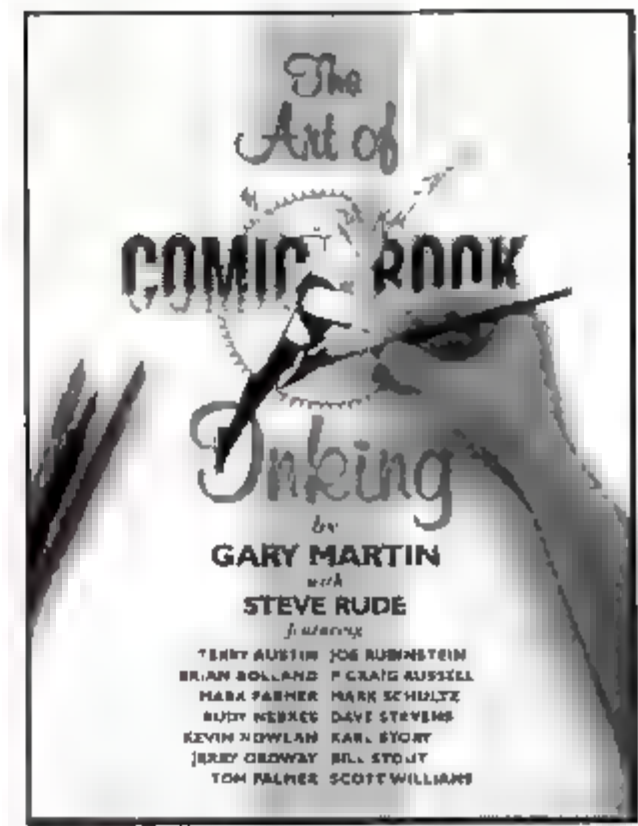
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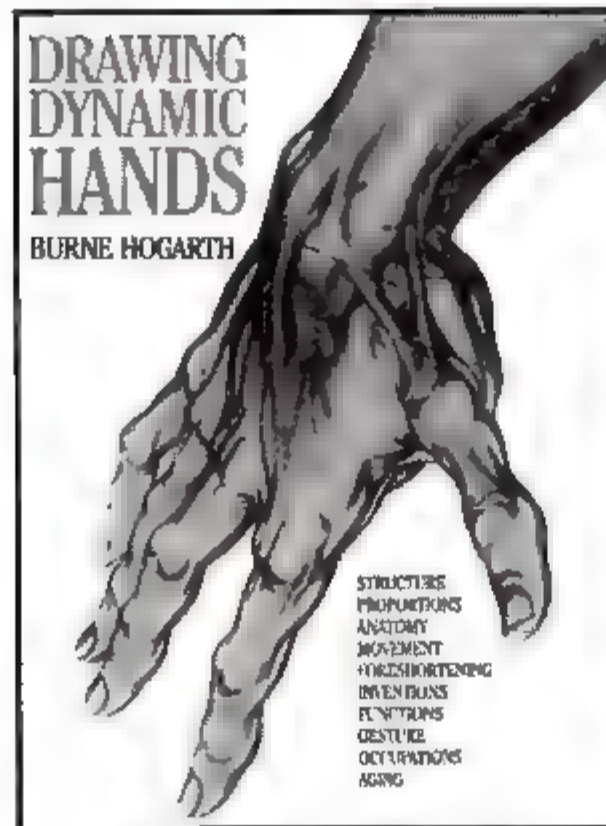
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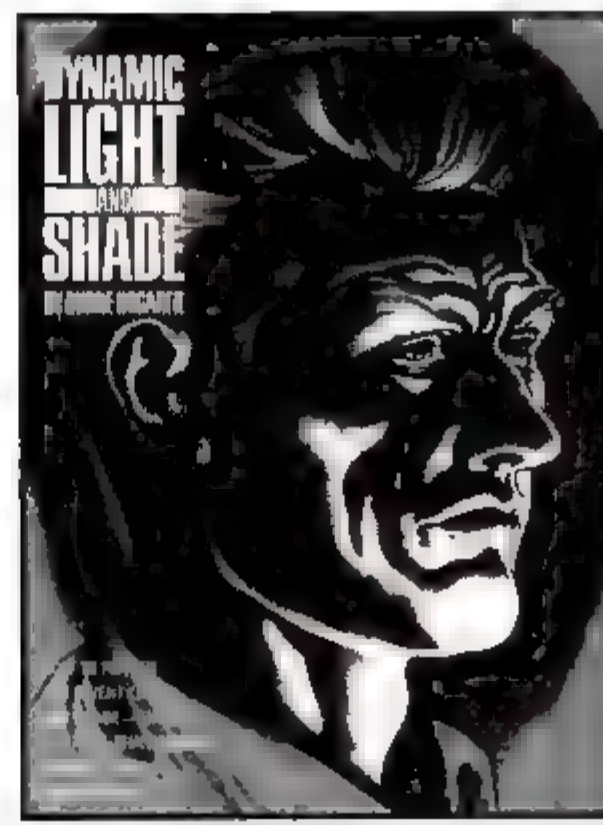
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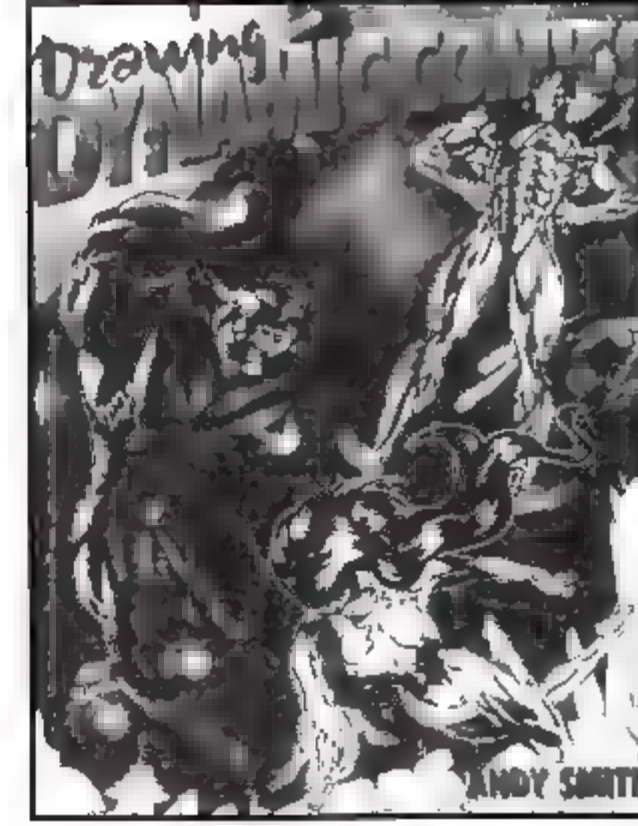
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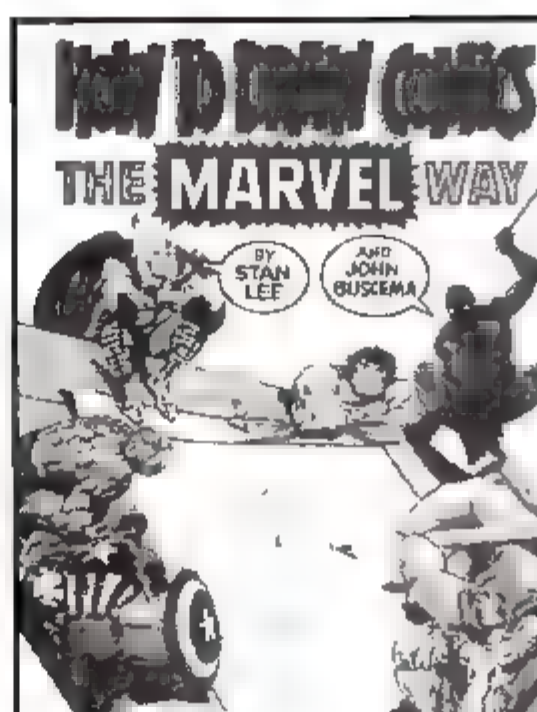
HOW TO DRAW COMICS THE MARVEL WAY

By Stan Lee and John Buscema

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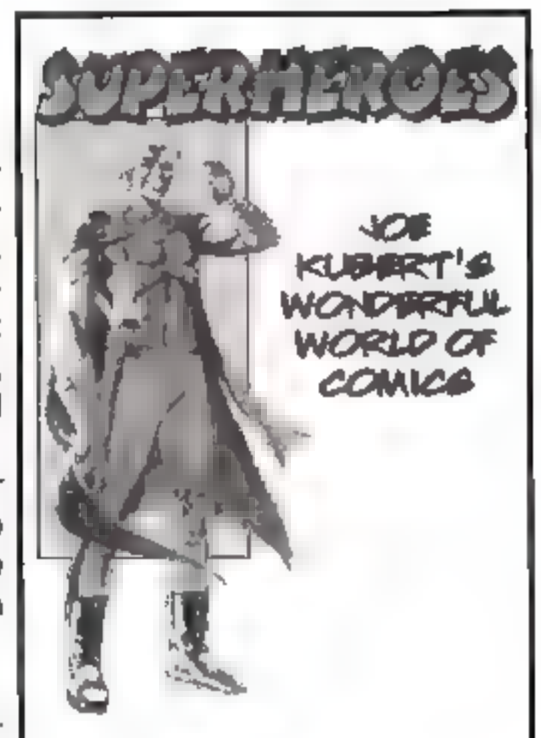
SUPERHEROES

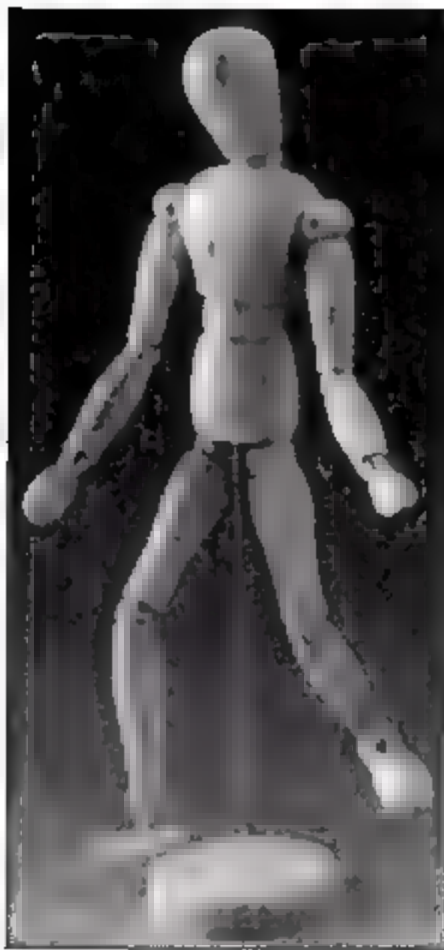
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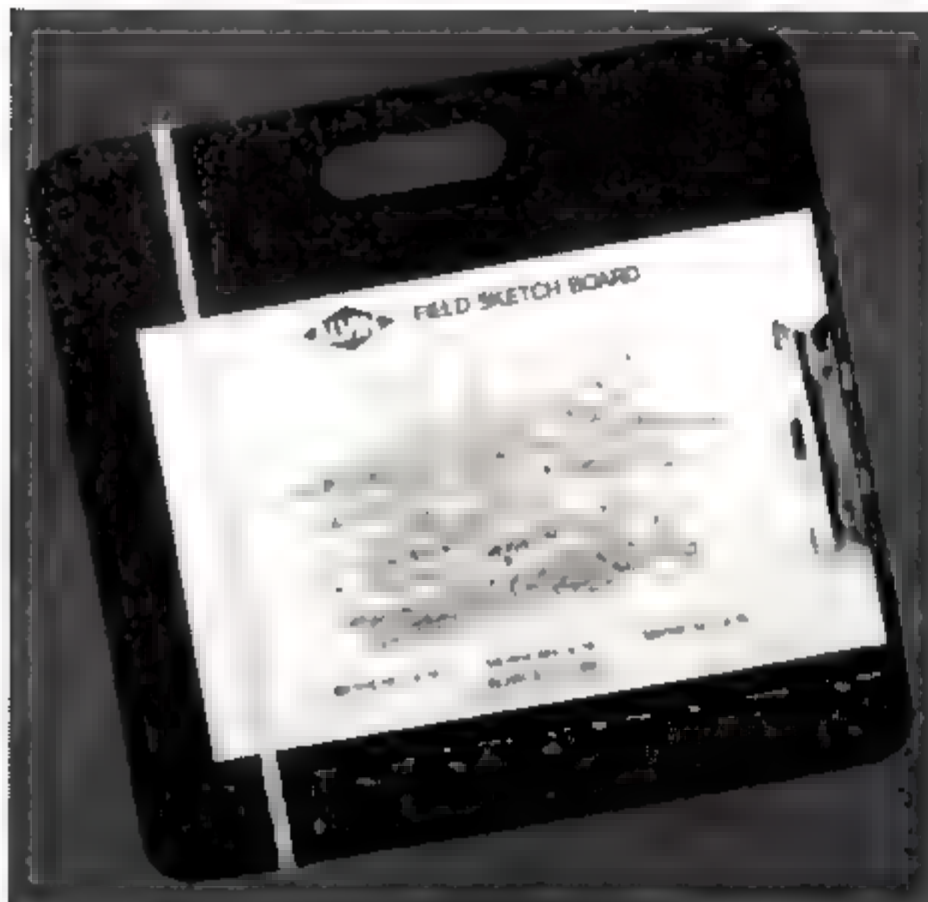
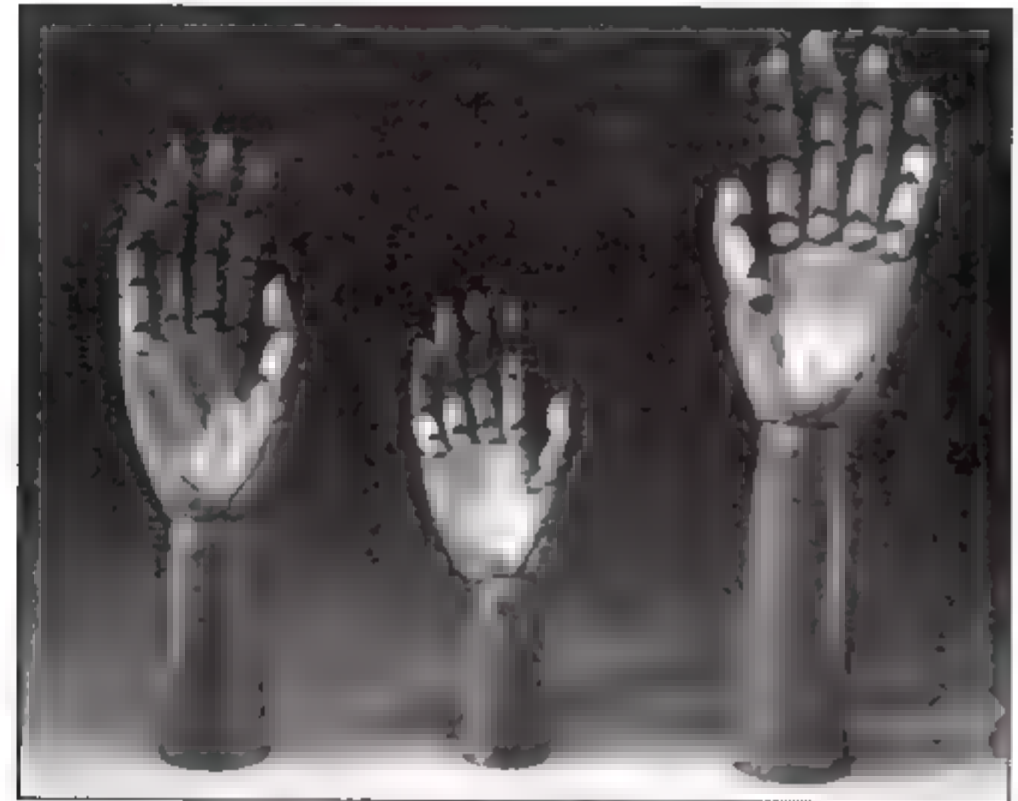
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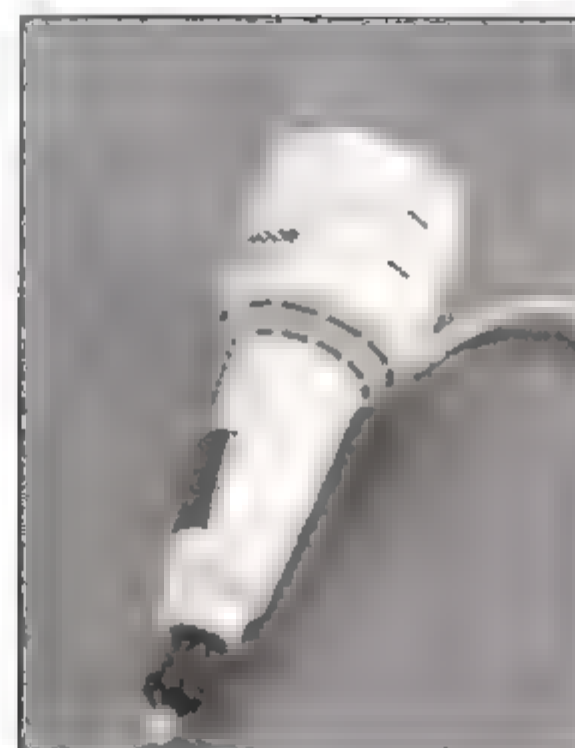
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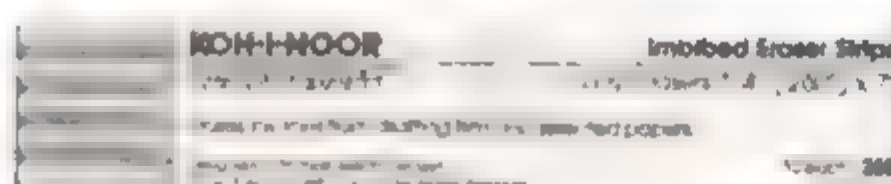


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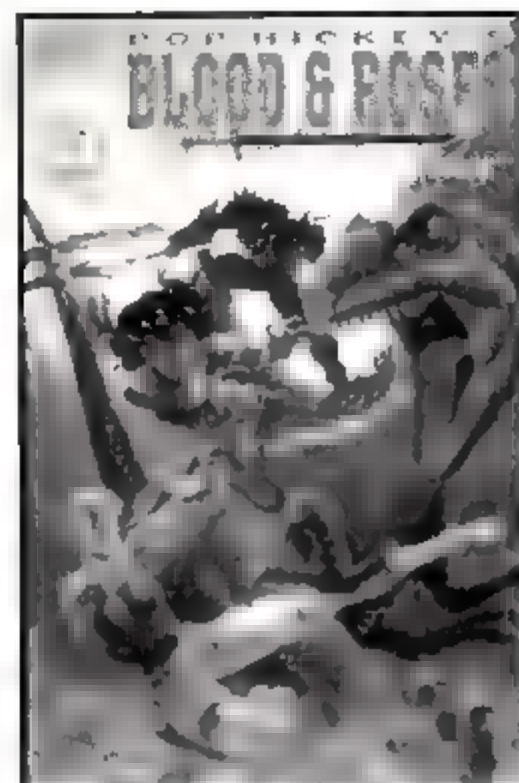
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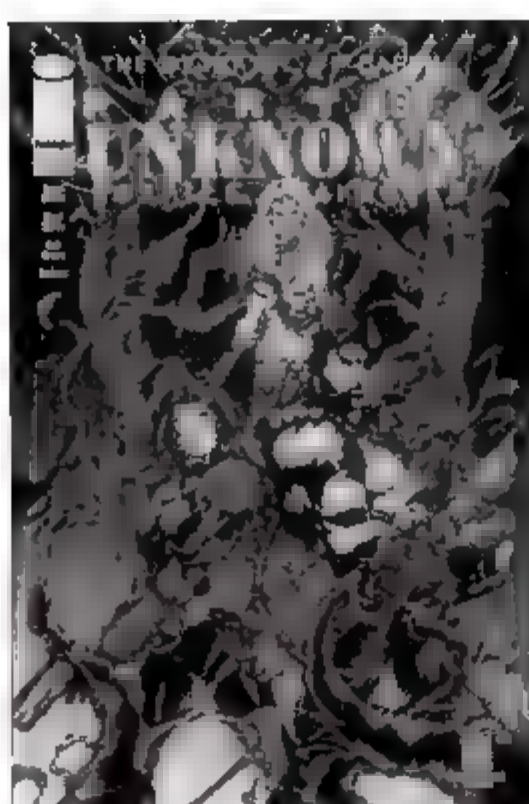
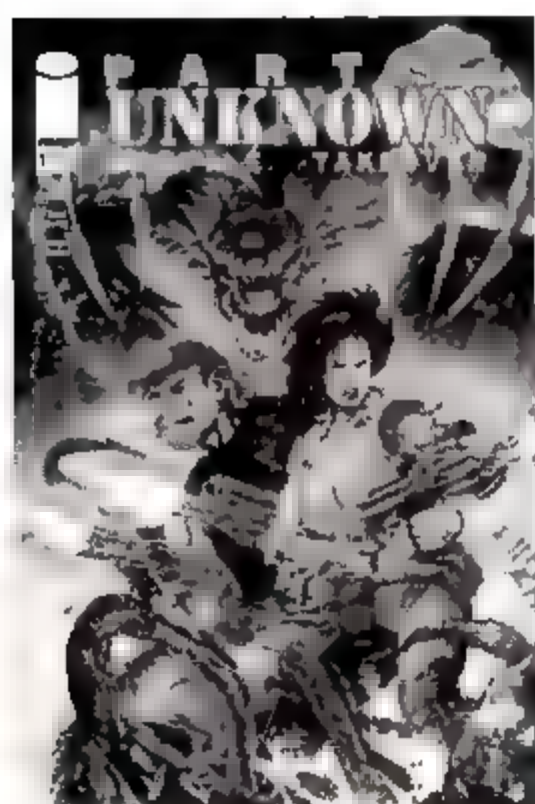
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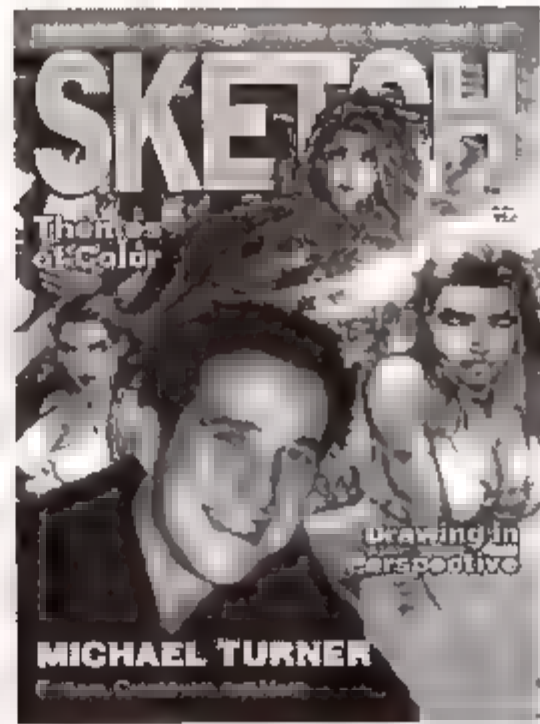
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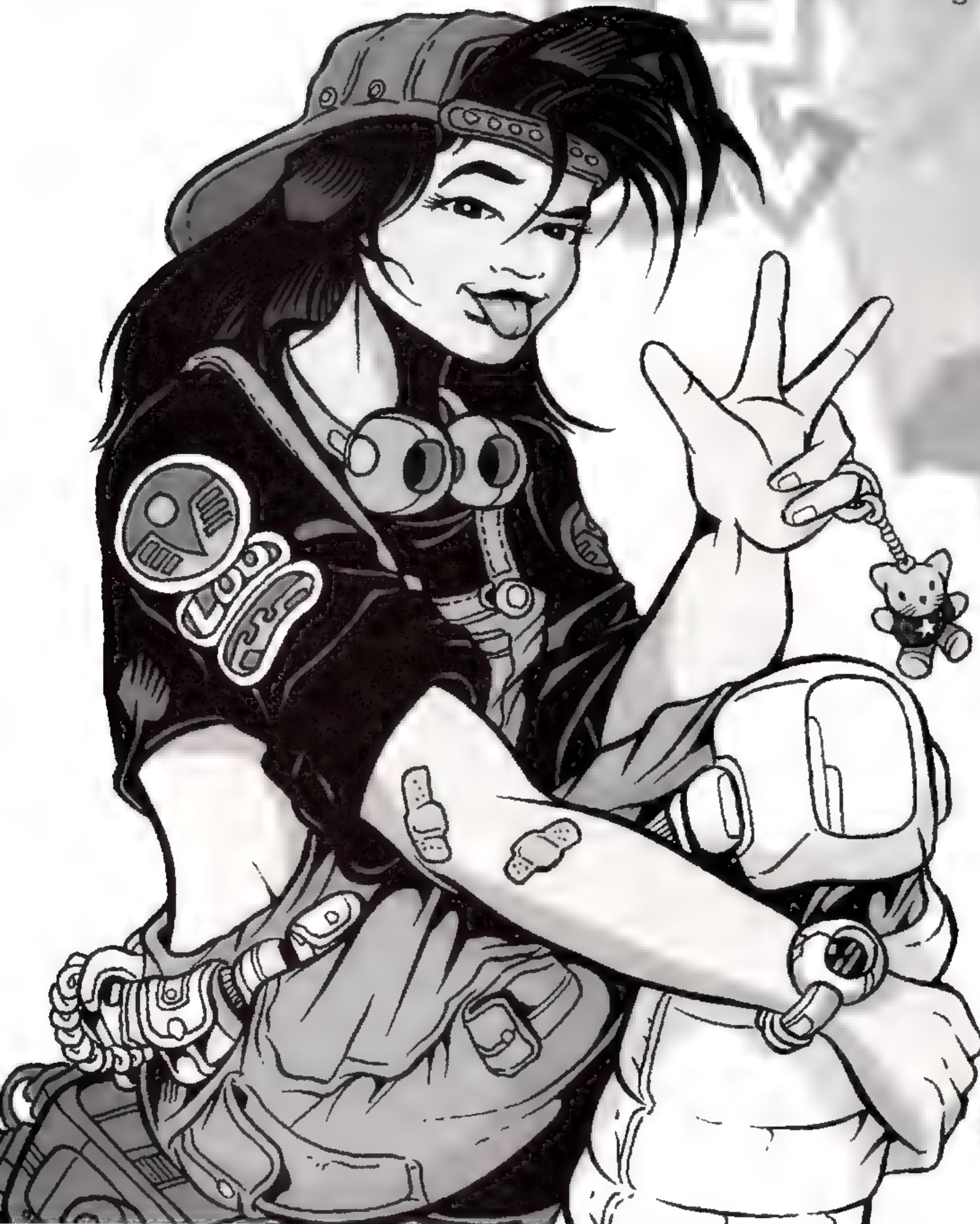
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DESIGNING OUTSIDE THE PANEL

MANGA IN MOTION

BY PAUL SIZER

Describing how manga and anime influence a comic artist's work is the equivalent of asking how a guitar influences a rock musician's work; it just does, either directly or indirectly by what has gone on before them. Since I first picked up a pencil, I've had Japanese comic art around me, seen it in cartoons on TV or in books. Whether I was directly using its techniques or just enjoying what it managed to accomplish, it affected me as an artist.

As I matured as an artist, I found myself wanting to search out the pure areas of my artform, becoming tired of artists haphazardly appropriating whatever style or technique they could rip off. I found the artists that I respected knew about techniques and style by studying them and respecting what they accomplished. This doesn't mean it was purely an academic endeavor; the artists I liked did this in an exciting and mind-blowing way! That's what I want to show in an article like this; stuff that makes me appreciate manga and anime that is well done. Not just what's popular, but what's worth finding and investigating to see how this powerful comics form can apply to all comic forms.

To start off, here's a short recommendation list of anime and manga titles that have influenced me in big ways, either art-wise or in storytelling technique. There's no way to address all the various kinds of manga and anime out there in just one article. Believe me, this is by no means a complete guide to the genre; just a sampling of what I've enjoyed as milestones for the medium:



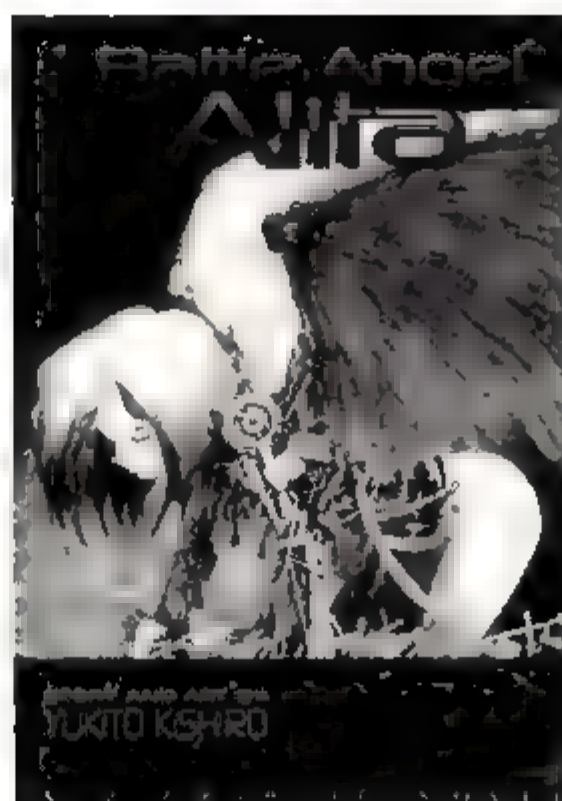
ANIME

AKIRA (Katsuhiro Otomo): Both the original manga and the movie are grand-daddies of Japanese comic form for American audiences, being one of the first major league anime films to hit in our country that wasn't directed only to children. Otomo's vision of future Tokyo and the future of humanity are skillfully mixed with elements of Japanese culture, cyberculture and gang violence. A movie that every comic fan should see.

GHOST IN THE SHELL (Masamune Shirow): Again, a great manga that became a great movie. Closely anticipating the event of today's proliferation of the internet, this cyberpunk science masterpiece show a future of genetically upgraded humans who are at home both in the physical world and the wired world. The story of a being who gains sentience within the internet is contrasted with cyborgs who question their own identity. Excellent use of traditional animation along side computer graphics.

KIKI'S DELIVERY SERVICE (Hayao Miyazaki): Called "The Walt Disney of Japanese Animation", Miyazaki often surpasses his American company counterpart in producing movies with incredibly beautiful and simple stories that can be enjoyed by adults and kids. His most recent American release, the epic "Princess Mononoke", was a sprawling eco-fable, yet "Kiki" is my pick because it succeeds by telling an endearing, simple story of a young witch's path to self discovery without getting all gooey and overly simplistic, a trend many (if not all) recent Disney animated films fall into.

GRAVE OF THE FIREFLIES (Akiyuki Nosaka): Adapted from the autobiographical novel by Nosaka, this incredibly powerful anime movie tells the story of a 14 year-old boy and his 4 year-old sister's struggle to survive in post World War 2 Japanese society that has been destroyed by the war. This emotionally charged film shows that a moving and tragic story can be told through the animated medium. Again, simple, uncluttered storytelling and thoughtful, well-realized animation make this film stand out for me. One of my all-time choices for great movie, animated or filmed. Well worth hunting down.



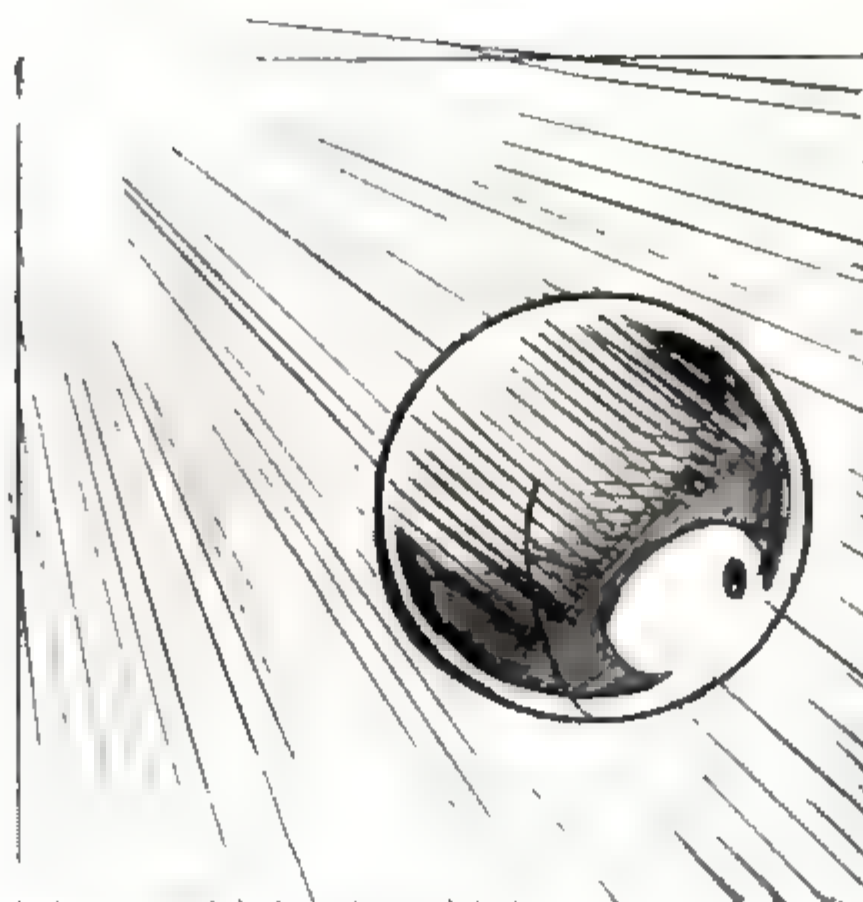
MANGA

VIDEO GIRL A-I (Masakuza Katsura): The classic story of “boy rents videotape, sexy girl jumps out of TV and into real world”, this series caught my eye mostly because of the gorgeous art. Katsura is known for his “cute girl” art, but he's no slouch at the other disciplines of his craft. Excellent facial expressions, great backgrounds and simple, clean linework make this series one of my favorites.

STEAM DETECTIVES (Kia Asamiya): Asamiya's love for classic literature settings along with his mix of cartoony and technogothic manga styles make his work stand out. His simplification of facial work, alongside painstakingly rendered environments is really amazing. He was recently tapped by DC comics to help in the redesign of Gotham City and other elements following last year's “No Man's Land” storyline.

BATTLE ANGEL ALITA (Yukito Kishiro): One of my favorites, this is cyberpunk manga at it's best! Nasty, fast, destructive, speedy action sequences that are some of the best you'll find. Cyborgs, robots and excellent decayed post-apocalyptic society mixes with a cool story of Alita, a female cyborg rebuilt by Professor Ido, a scientist and bounty hunter, into a sleek and efficient warrior machine in human form. The endearing father-daughter relationship between Ido and Alita makes the story even more powerful.

Unless the comic you're working on is “FreeZor, The Man Frozen In The Big Block Of Ice Forever”, your comic work will probably involve motion in some way. For me, I go to the source for learning about ways of showing motion in comics; Japanese manga. So, in the interest of me blabbing less and showing more, follow Mini Paul around for a short tour of different kinds of motion techniques in comics, and how to use them...

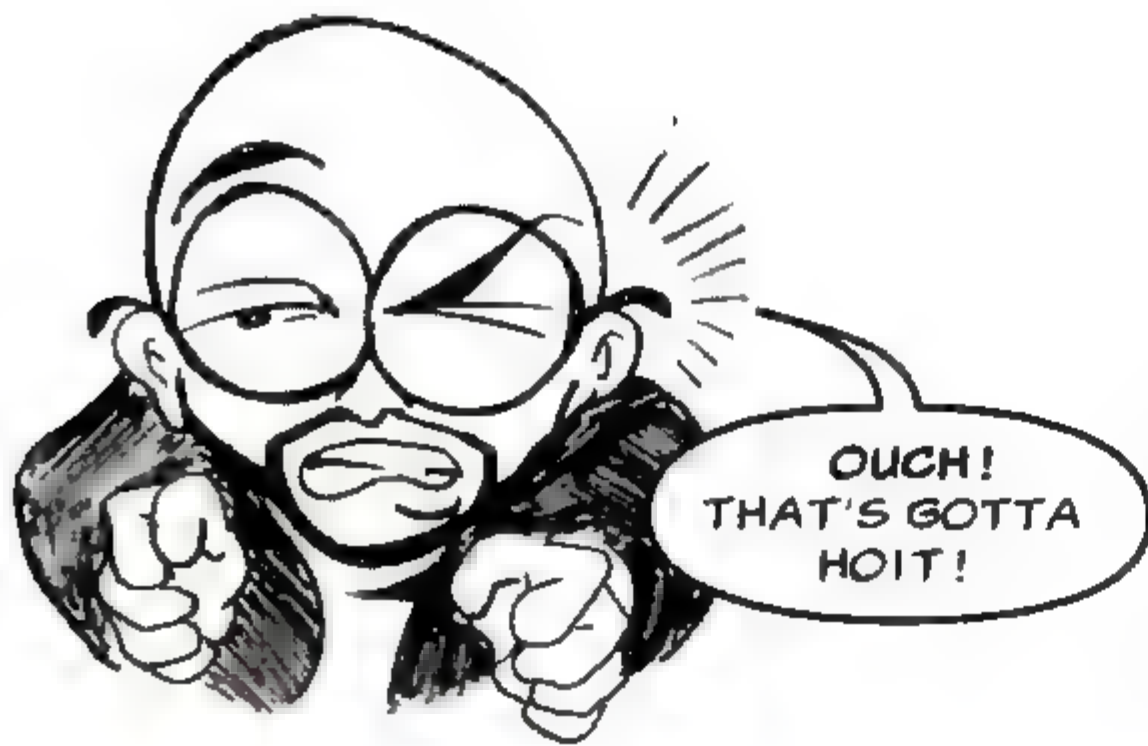


example A



example B

Example A shows **SUBJECTIVE MOTION**, because we the viewer are moving along with the subject that's moving, while the background blurs by (commonly referred to as “speed lines”). Example B shows **OBJECTIVE MOTION**, because we are seeing the moving object move through an environment as we stand in one place and watch it go by. Subjective motion makes the viewer feel more a part of the action, like they're in the driver's seat!



Anyway, here are some examples of subjective and objective motion applied to human forms. Example C shows a **SUBJECTIVE MOTION PUNCH**, because we are traveling with the fist as the guy's head moves away from the force of the impact. Also notice that the background impact lines all radiate from the center of where the punch connected, or **IMPACT POINT**. This helps draw the reader's eye to where the action is on the panel.



example C



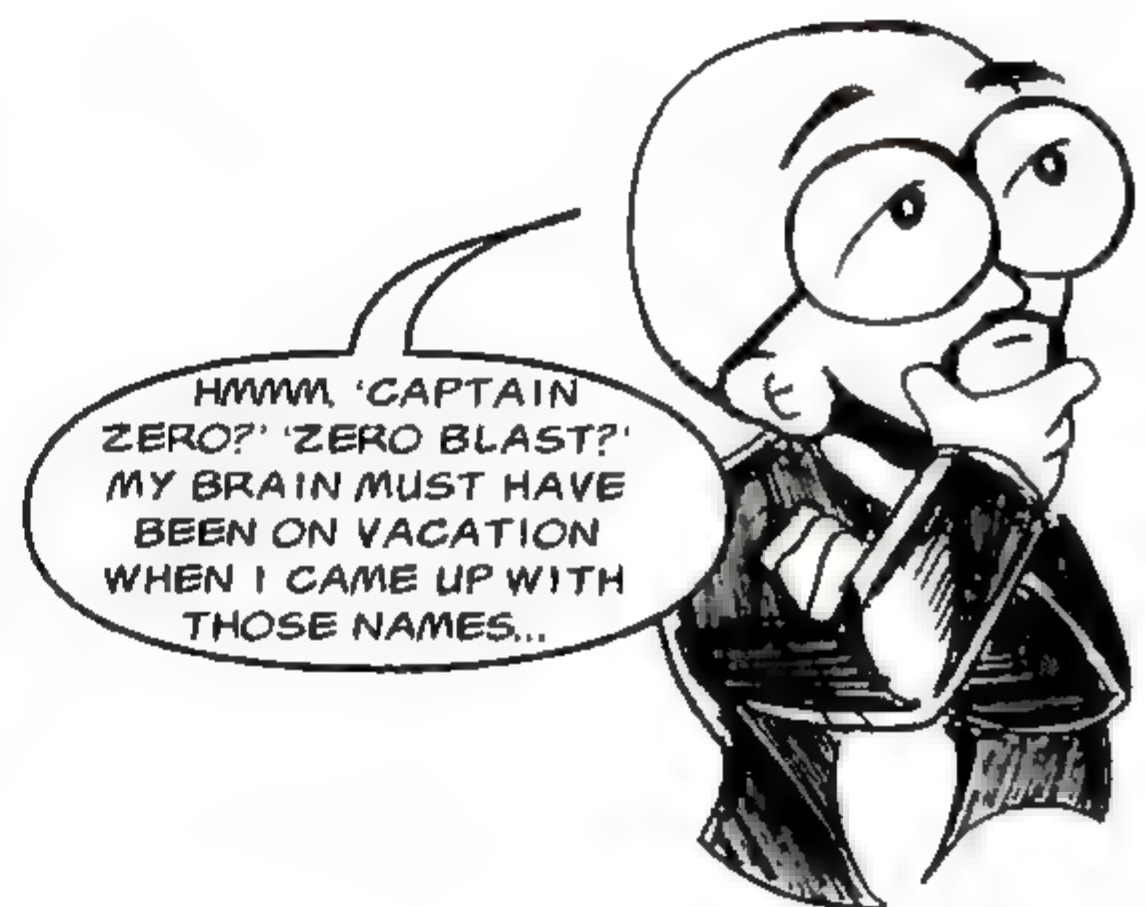
example D

Example D shows what I would call a **SUBJECTIVE MOTION BLUR**, a technique where the subject we're moving with (in this case, the guy's fist) is blurred to show even more speed than we can keep up with. This effect is made by using speed lines to define the edges of his hand, rather than solid lines. Notice that there are multiple reference points for the various speed lines in this picture; the lines on the puncher's fist move along his arm, the lines of the punchee's head show it's direction away from the blow, and the background impact lines again radiate from the central impact point of the blow itself. Also notice that near the epicenter of the impact point my speed lines become thinner and less prominent, until the actual hit area has no speed lines. This gives the illusion of an explosion, white hot at the center, more visible at the outer edges.

Example E shows a way to have speed lines emphasize a movement like an energy blast or gunshot. While Captain Zero strikes a pose and fires his "Zero Blast", we can show the motion of the blast itself by having the speed lines blur the background, also directing the viewer's eye to where the blast is going. Note that the vanishing point for the speed lines is actually outside of the panel. Also notice how the panel can be broken up by having the tendrils of energy radiate more organically from the origin point of the blast itself.

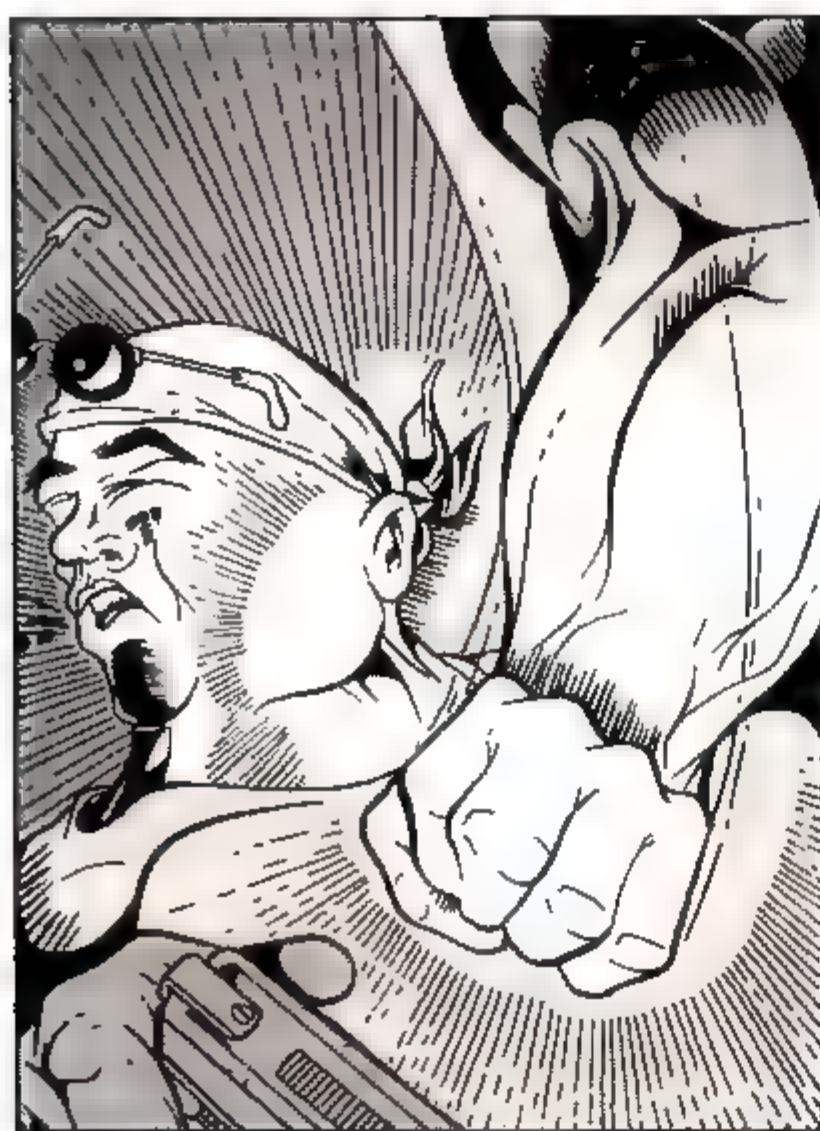


example E





example F

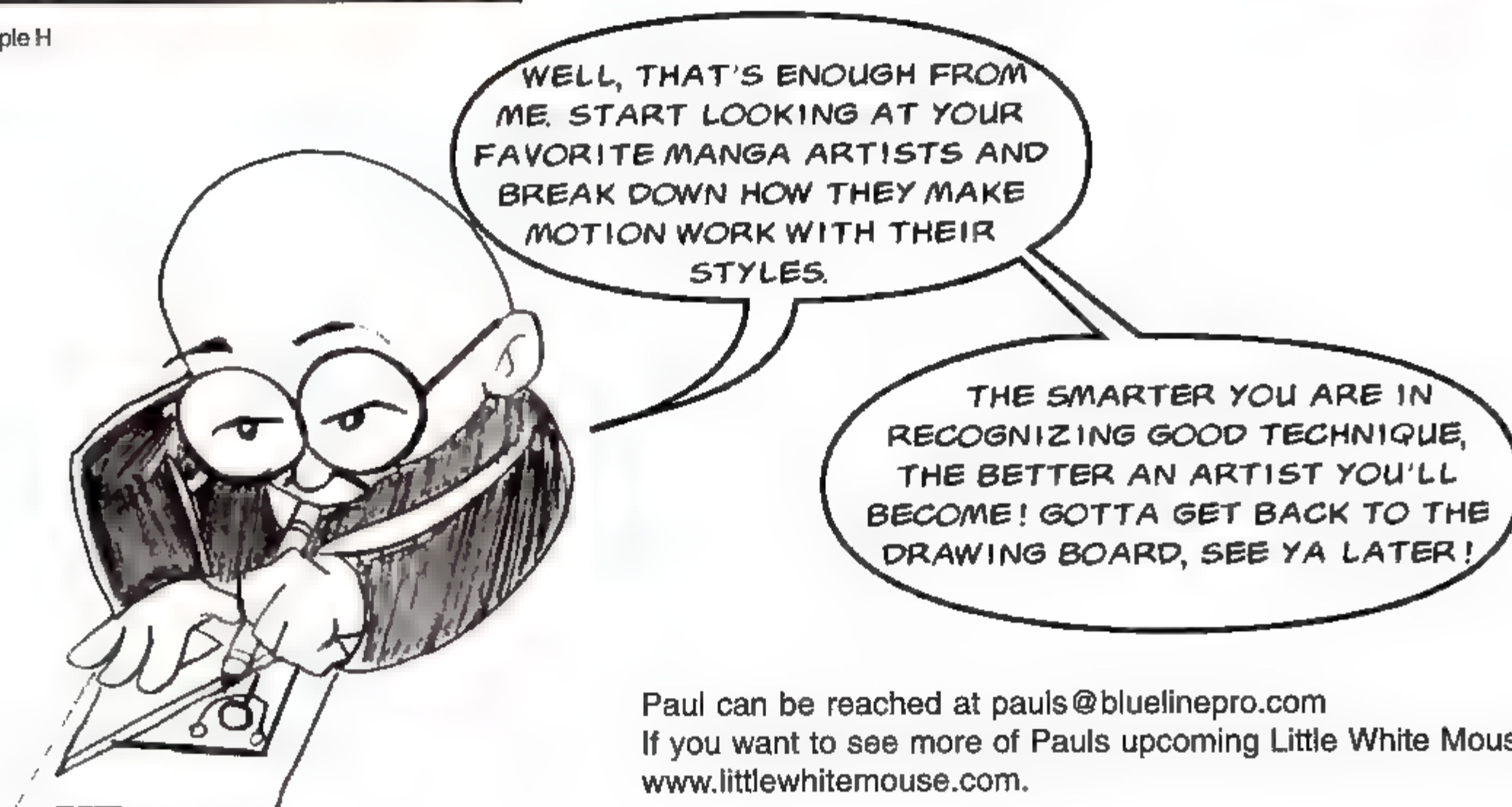


example H



example G

Examples F-H show how I use different kinds of motion techniques in my own comic panels. Although I use manga techniques, I tend to mix them in with other styles, so my comic work is not purely manga by a long shot. I also try not to overuse them either, as artists who do tend to fall on them as a crutch or excuse for not having to draw backgrounds. It's like watching a movie with nothing but big explosions; soon, even that becomes REALLY BORING! All of my manga picks at the beginning of this article balance out great action and motion sequences with quiet scenes, good establishing shots, and respect for line and form. That's the balance I always work towards.



Paul can be reached at pauls@bluelinepro.com
If you want to see more of Pauls upcoming Little White Mouse series go to www.littlewhitemouse.com.



by Clint McElroy

Up to this point in these brilliantly written diatribes, I have concentrated on how to use the media to promote your product, mostly using under-handed, barely ethical schemes and manipulative behavior. This time around, we are cleansing the pallet, so to speak. I want to show you how to use media (other than the four-colored one you are hoping to squeeze a living out of) to make you a better creator. So, the subtitle of this column is:

READ A FREAKIN' BOOK!

I have to start with a disclaimer. This is going to read like a condemnation of sorts, along the lines of those fire-and-brimstone evangelists who pound the pulpit and assure you that you are on a greased-up downhill slope to the steaming bowels of Hell. You may dismiss this as one of those speeches your dad used to give you just before he told you to get off your pimply behind and find a summer job. But I urge you: **DO NOT DISMISS THIS!** This may just be the most important thing you will read in your life! Okay...the most important thing you will read...today...next to Marmaduke.

It's very true, that when you are looking for that first break in the business, you need a template to follow:

"I want to draw like Buscema."

"Which one? John or Sal?"

Or perhaps:

"I want to write like Wolfman"

"Which one? Marv or Lawrence Talbot?"

A recent survey indicated that 90% of the people involved in the comic book industry were comic book fans when they were younger. The number might have been higher, but I only called ten people; nine said they were fans and the tenth told me he was too busy to talk and how did I get his cell phone number in the first place? So I could have taken that for a "yes", in which case the number would have been 100%.

Not a darned thing wrong with that. We all have to have a foundation to start with, someone to emulate. The danger is creators relying **ONLY** on comics for their inspiration.

I can hear the cries already. "You don't know what you're talking about, man! I don't get my inspiration from **JUST** comics! I get a lot of it from movies, too!"

That's legitimate. Movies are a great source

of inspiration for the comic book artist and writer. Let's face it, the two media are closely related: A strongly visual presentation married to a narrative that is very episodic in its story telling, using the images to fill in the details. Sit down with comics pros at a convention and the first topic of conversation will be movies...second if Julie Strain is at the convention. Just remember, there are other movies out there besides "Matrix", "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" and the "Die Hard" trilogy. Writers, there are some great story inspirations available to you. Just click on the Turner Classic Movie channel. If you have your brain wired in a creative configuration, there's no way you can watch a great movie like "Seven Samurai" or "The Searchers" and not come away with a ton of story ideas. And I'm not talking rip-offs of those plots, but story ideas inspired by the character interactions, the dramatic conflicts, and the nuts and bolts of a story.

Artists, the field of inspiration is even more fertile for you. Watch old movies for camera angles, use of light and perspective. My favorite single shot in Richard Donner's "Superman" was the one where Clark and Ma Kent were standing in that wheat field, and the camera went sweeping past them and away. I wanted to rush right out and sketch something and I can't draw a bath! Picture yourself as a cinematographer, using a pencil instead of a lens...and making a lot less money, and hanging out with a lot fewer starlets.

Like movies, television can inspire, but you have to watch it differently. You have to view it with an observer's eye, not an audience member's. Analyze what you are seeing, the dialogue you are hearing. Using that technique, **ANYTHING** you watch can give you ideas. And I don't mean the kind of ideas you get watching "Baywatch", those are things better dealt with in the privacy of your own home.

Most importantly: **READ A FREAKIN' BOOK!** (You knew I'd get back to that, didn't you?)

I have to admit, in my travels I have formed the opinion that comic book people are more literate than most people. Of course, I live in Appalachia, where the predominate reading material is usually done in felt-tip pin on a men's room wall and starts with: "Here I sit, all broken-hearted..."

I remember talking to the late (and very terrific) Carol Kaltsch and finding out that

we both became readers through comic books. I have encountered a lot of people like that. So don't give up on it once you start pursuing writing or drawing for a profession. Yes, I said drawing. When you are really into a book, you are conjuring visions in your head. Artists merely translate those visions to another medium.

And I am talking all kinds of reading. Read sci-fi, fantasy, crime, but don't limit yourself just to those because they seem to fit the mold of the type of stories featured in comics. Here's a great example: You want to learn how to write about a hero? I mean a true hero with courage and integrity? Read Louis L'Amour. Pick up one of the Sackett books. Grab a classic: "Moby Dick" is a great read and is written on more levels than the Chrysler Building. And not just fiction. Read historical books, read Thoreau, read a magazine, newspapers.

If you can get your hands (ears?) on any old radio dramas you will find no better primer on how to tell a story in a compelling, concise, and yet exciting way. Those radio writers knew their stuff, my friend. Find out if anyone in your area is carrying a radio show called "When Radio Was", or look for recordings of old shows in record or books stores.

Another medium that can prove invaluable is **CONVERSATION**. Talk to people. Listen to their stories. I can remember making a trip to New York City with Chuck Dixon. We stayed over one night at the home of a friend of mine on Long Island (pronounced "Lon GYE-land" I learned that night). We had a great dinner at a Mexican restaurant, and over the chimichangas, my friend told us about someone he knew who drove one of those neighborhood ice cream trucks. A "local businessman" asked him to hold onto some "merchandise" for him, figuring the mobile nature of the ice cream truck vendor's business would make it very difficult for the local authorities to track down said merchandise. The ice cream man would be paid a nice stipend for his efforts. Unfortunately, he had taken on more and more clients, and was in danger of having it blow up in his face.

On the train ride back, Dixon said to me: "That would make a great Batman story!" And of course he didn't say another word from that point on because he was "creating." It only **LOOKED** like he was sleeping and only **SOUNDED** like he was snoring. Did he use the idea? I have no idea. He stopped sending me free copies of his books and I'm soooooo cheap.

So the point...hmmmmmm, I know I have one. Oh Yeah! The point is feed that noggin of yours, Buckwheat! That's where the stories and images are going to come from that will make you more than just another Xerox machine spitting out your slight variation on a Claremont plot, or your reprise of a Liefeld pose.

I have to run right now. I have this idea for a Batman story with an ice cream vendor I want to send to Denny O'Neill before Dixon reads this and remembers.

MAD DOG RETAILING: 101

by Michael Clark, Showcase Comics



Some things in life you can't ignore. In this case it was the deep, gravelly voice of Flint Henry on the phone asking politely for Mr. Clark. This is a trick that Flint likes to play on you. You think "Hey, if he's asking for me, maybe he hasn't recognized my voice yet and I can pretend to be someone else, and then run and hide under the back issue bins." But as usual my mouth was one step ahead of my brain, and I unwittingly said something like "Hi Flint, it's Mike", and was thus caught, and unable to make a getaway. Let's just ignore how he then played with me for the next half hour, the way a particularly nasty cat might play with a mouse, and cut to the point where he said "Mike, I'd like you to write an article for me." And I of course said yes, because, well, you just don't turn down someone like Flint. For God's sake, the man used to draw *Grimjack*, and when someone has drawn a comic like that, you just know they are capable of all kinds of mayhem in real life.

Not that coming up with something to write about is a tough thing for me. I usually spend at least a few hours a week ranting about the comics industry. Sometimes it's in the store, but it might also be to some complete stranger in a super market who just happened to be walking a little too near me on a day when Marvel or one of the other mental giants of the industry opened its mouth. It's one of those unexplained mysteries in life. Bill Jemas announces that retailers who disagree with him are stupid, and some poor guy gets cornered in the frozen food section and told all about it in detail for 15 minutes. If nothing else, writing a column for Flint is a good thing as it lessens the chance of my getting picked up for assault - and I get a larger audience at which to rant.

Hopefully, I won't just rant and rave. Ideally, I'll be able to summon up some wisdom to pass on to you, make you think about something in a different way, or teach you some way to make an extra dollar selling, drawing, or distributing comics.

For this month's topic I'd like to look at how a book gets solicited in Previews, and try to give the people who solicit the books a few hints on how to make a retailer, like

myself, pay attention and order their product. For those of you who aren't familiar with the process, let's review it.

Comic stores get most, if not all, of their comics from Diamond Comics Distributing. (We'll save that discussion for another month.) Basically, if you want to sell a comic to stores, you talk to DCD about putting a solicitation (ad) in Previews, DCD's monthly catalog of comics. Diamond ships Previews to retailers, the retailer orders what he wants, and Diamond, in turn, orders from the publisher. Artist and writer create a comic, their publisher ships it to Diamond, and DCD sends the comics to the retailer. The retailer pays Diamond and Diamond pays the publisher. All make a living.

However, it's just never quite so simple. Previews is a huge publication, and many comics get overlooked. Add to this the fact that the books are non-returnable to retailers, and too many unsold books means a store is out of business. Buyers have to make good decisions on what, and how many, comics to order. Here are a few do's and don'ts for publishers. Remember - the retailer is making his decision to order your book from a little paragraph of information, and you're just one item out of thousands.

In your Previews solicitation, please give me - as a retailer - information, and not hype.

How many times have you seen this? "In the tradition of Jack Kirby and Stan Lee, XYZ publishing presents their latest hot comic, "XYZ", destined to be the next major collectors item! Written in the tradition of Neil Gaiman and JRR Tolkien, this fantastic story promises to be the hit of the year! Make sure you've got enough of this book because when fans see up and coming superstar "XYZ's" hot art, you know it's going to mean huge sales, and huge profits!

Sadly, I see a lot of this type of solicitation. I've been told nothing about the book, just promises about a comic that just can't be as good as promised. With no information, I get to make a choice:

gamble on an unknown book, or skip it. Since the one thing I do know is that the publisher doesn't even know how to solicit a book properly, I decide to skip. Maybe I'm missing out on a good book, but maybe not. I'd rather put money into a book about which I know the artist and writer, something about the plot, the creative team's past works, etc.

Be on Time

Don't solicit a book unless you can put it out on time. This is so important, but so abused. You solicit a book but it never comes out. Or it comes out so late that anyone who saw an ad for it, read an interview, or heard about it at their local store, has long since lost interest. It's stale; it's old. And, what does it say about future issues being on time? So many books, good and bad, die because they are late. Sales are a fraction of what they could be. One of the many things that astounds me is how some creators can knock out a book month after month, and tell a story. Yet others seem tired after 4 or 5 issues, and never finish anything. It's amazing that readers will put up with 22 pages a month of story. When it becomes two months, or four months, or six months, the book is dead. *Soul Saga* is a typical example. We sold large numbers of issues one and two, fewer of three, and now, the latest issue was so late, we sold a whopping 12 copies - down from a high of 150. What should I order on the next issue - 6 copies - 4? Having a reputation of late publishing will have a negative effect on orders. Having a rep of being on time gives a retailer confidence that the book will be on his shelf with a good chance of selling.

Be on time with issue #2

So, you got your first issue out, and it

sold. If number two comes out on time you can keep interest in the series going, and start to build a following. If it's late, you start having problems. The reader may decide you're going to just keep being late, why bother? He can always find something else to collect. By the time your second issue comes out, he may be onto issue 3 or 4 of another series. See ya. And me, the guy who orders? If I order issue #1 and it's late, I may decide to just cut my orders for any further issue down to the minimum, or not order at all. The last thing I need is another book that comes out every 6 months.

Finish what you start.

Don't turn a 4 issue series into a 2 issue series because you fell behind. Don't just leave people hanging. You owe it to the retailer with unsold books on his rack, and your readers who want to see the story, to finish what you start. When something stops in the middle, I don't trust that team nearly as much in the future. I still want to know the ending of *Sonic Blasters*. A creator that starts a lot of projects and doesn't finish, switches companies or titles, or is simply unreliable, isn't going to get much of my business. I'd rather put my trust in the companies/creators that finish every mini-series, instead of cutting them in the middle.

Have a target audience, and don't make your book unsellable to that audience.

Think about for whom you are writing the story, and then keep them in mind as you do each issue. I carry books aimed at kids, or teens, or adults. But what I can't sell is a book aimed at teens or children with inappropriate content. Did anyone notice the bare breasts in a few issues of *Dragonball*? It makes it a little tough when you have to bag a comic on your kids rack, and then tell parents you can't sell it to their children. It was likewise with *Savage Dragon*. Half the book's following in my store was kids ages 10 to 16. It's a great book, a good story, lots of action, fun. I loved it. Then Eric Larsen decided to add a bit of sex, a shower scene, and the wonderful "Don't #@* with God" panel. What am I supposed to do? Sell the kids every other issue? And what should I tell them when they complain that I won't sell it to them? They want the book, and here I am saying they

can't have it. I finally got fed up, and we now order *Savage Dragon* for subs, and don't put it on the shelf at all. This cuts my sales by 20 issues or so, and Eric Larsen loses 20 or so sales to me. Not a good solution - but he decides what to write, and I decide what to sell. So that's where it stands.

Rely on a solid story and art to sell a book, not gimmicks.

I don't mind an occasional extra cover or gimmick. But some titles seem to have 5 versions of every issue. Deluxe, Signed, Leather, Chrome, Black and White - you name it, it's a variant. I'd rather see issues 1 to 5 out, than 5 versions of one issue. In the long run the customer that buys this stuff burns out, and I lose a customer. The

guy that I convince to buy *Authority* comes back for all the trades, signs up for *Planetary*, and based on my say so, grabs a *JLA* trade. He buys more comics because he likes reading comics. The guy with 5 copies of variant first issues wonders how to file them, gives up, and never comes back.

Is that everything? Nope. But that's some of it. A book isn't going to get to the reader if it never gets ordered. So please make the most of that little paragraph you get in Previews, and when you're creating your book, think about what you're doing and how it will effect future sales.

Michael Clark can be reached at michaelc@bluelinepro.com

3...2...1... Blast Off! Into the Golden Age of Space Toys with Dark Horse!

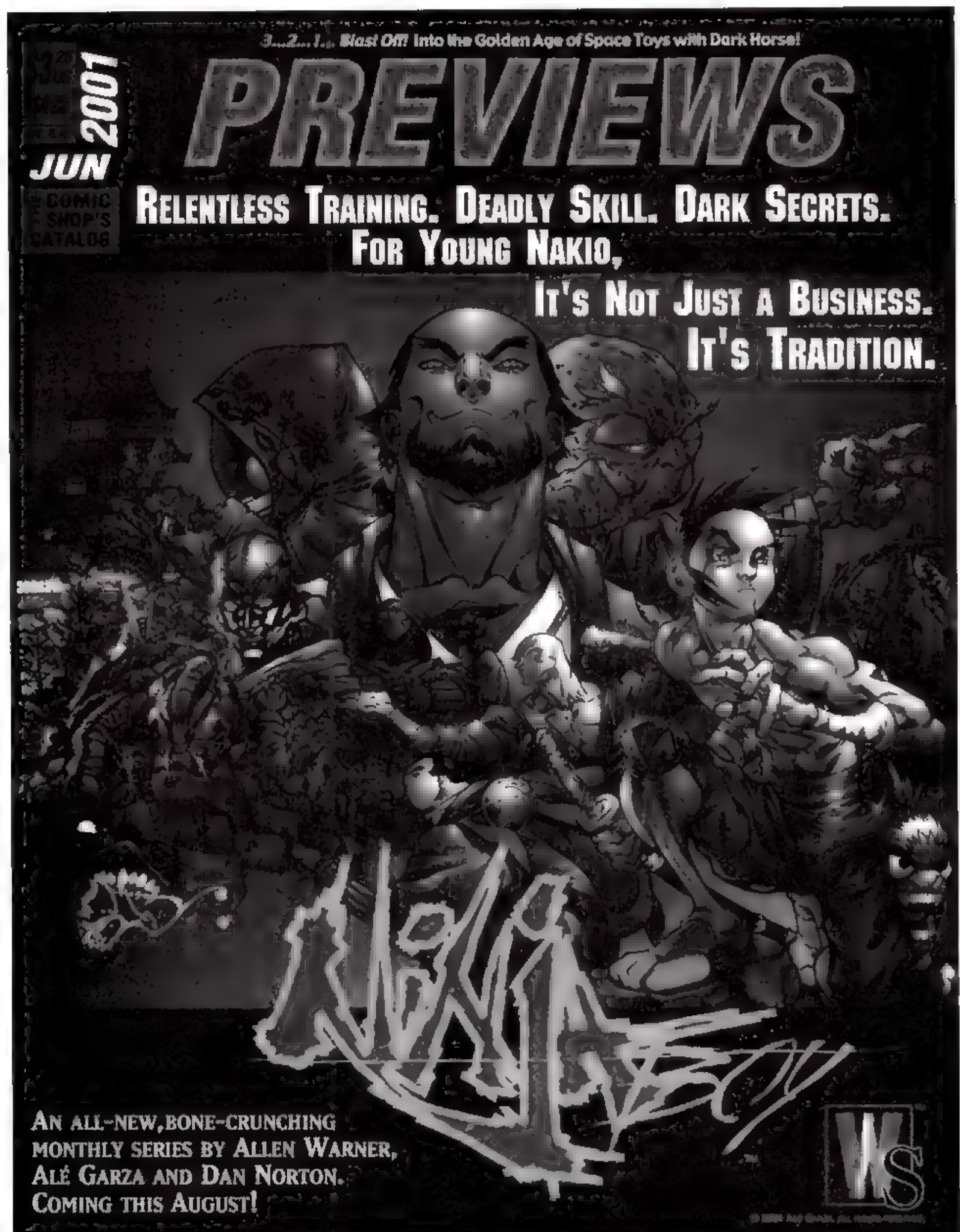
PREVIEWS

RELENTLESS TRAINING. DEADLY SKILL. DARK SECRETS.

FOR YOUNG NAKIO,

IT'S NOT JUST A BUSINESS.

IT'S TRADITION.



AN ALL-NEW, BONE-CRUNCHING MONTHLY SERIES BY ALLEN WARNER, ALÉ GARZA AND DAN NORTON. COMING THIS AUGUST!

WS

Letters Forum

All letters received will be considered for publication. Letters published will be done so **as received** in regards to spelling, punctuation, etc. - however, letters may be edited for length, language, and/or other considerations. All letters should be signed by the writer, as well as including the writer's legibly printed name, address, and contact numbers (phone, fax, e-mail). Opinions expressed are those of their respective letter writers, and not necessarily shared by Blue Line. While open as a critical forum, it is Blue Line's hope and intention that correspondence maintains constructive and positive elements of criticism. Simple name calling, rumor mongering, and/or maliciousness is not of interest. Unless our editor does it. You may send your letters via e-mail to letters@bluelinepro.com.

Hi Joe

Man, I just read your "Designing A Comic Book Page" part one from ish#6 and I have to tell you that those finished penciled pages are Dynamite! I really applaud your level of detail on them. When I pick up a comic for \$2.99, I expect to see lots of details like on your pages, but I don't. Your article takes the mystery out of how a comic page is constructed. Your advice towards the end, to 'think of your pencil as an ink pen while drawing' was worth the price of the issue alone! Anyway, I wanted to ask you a question. I like inking, but not on a light box. What good brand of vellum could I use to ink over pages? Do the good people at Blue Line Pro sell this particular brand? Also, after inking all these years with a brush and getting loads of hand cramps, I'm starting to use more pen, namely Hunt 102 nibs. Any recommendations on how to take a brand new nib and getting it inking ready?

Thanks!

Rama Persaud

Brooklyn, NY

Rama-

I'm glad my advice could be of help, and if you like lots of detail and bang for your buck, be sure to pick up Blood and Rose: Time Lords #1 when it debuts later this year (just keep checking the pages of this magazine for more details very soon).

Unfortunately, there is no particular brand of vellum I use specifically that I can recommend since I use it so rarely. I do suggest you stick with a brush if you use vellum, since the pen nibs can be somewhat destructive and tear the paper should you press too hard. I ink primarily on Bristol board using a Hunts 102 nib also. Usually when I have a fresh nib that's very sharp, I break it in by doing the smaller line work and details first (like faces for example). As the nib begins to wear down more, I go for the bigger and thicker lines. Your comment about taking the mystery out of the art is something Bob Hickey and I were just talking about the other night. Some artists don't like to share their secrets, which might keep them at the top of their game and ahead of the competition on their own pedestals. But we feel that our job here at Sketch is preparing the next level of creators for all the companies out there. Creators who will not only hopefully someday work in this field professionally, but also keep this industry alive and kickin' since it has been so good and fun to us. It's our goal to share, and we look forward to passing on our techniques to others so we get can get such satisfactory feedback like yours, though I couldn't explain every technique I use anyway since a lot of what I do in terms of actual drawing comes from personal style and gut instinct. Thanks for enjoying my article and good luck with the inking.

-Joe

Dear Mr. Hickey,

I have been trying to get into the comic field for years now. I'm getting nowhere it seems like, I have nothing but love for the industry but I keep running into walls every direction I go. I'm currently working

on my own book that I plan to self publish later in the year. The only problem is that all the comic related magazines give almost no attention to unknown independent titles, in "Sketch" Mr. Maydak is surfing all over the net, finding these sites that are comic related, the only problem is that 98% of them are geared towards the bigger companies. I think that "Sketch" should dedicate a page or two focusing on some of the self published creators, I understand that the big guys sell. But I've seen and read about the same people since 1994 (with a few exceptions) and they really don't have anything that important to tell us anymore that we haven't heard a hundred times already. What about the new, fresh artist's that have mountains of different view points that no one will ever hear unless things change. If finding these people is a problem let me know and I'll surf the net for free I'll do anything for a little exposure. Besides, independent comic publishers have been hidden in the basement for too long and it would be a good monthly article for people to read and it's different than all the other comic magazines that are out. Who knows maybe someday an independent publisher could be on the cover of Sketch due to popular demands, thanks to small articles that were printed in your magazine.

Thank you for your time and I hope you give this some thought let me know what you think,

-Jon Malin

P.S.

Maybe the comic market is doing so bad because there is no real change, people who used to be at the top of their game are getting out dated and not moving aside for the next wave of talent to roll in.

Hi Jon,

I like the idea about highlighting the independents. It would be very feasible, as well as interesting, to have a page dedicated to review a couple of indy web-sites. Matter of fact, back in issue #4, I asked our readers to send me any web sites they thought were worth reviewing. Sadly, I got very little response. As for surfing the web, for every one good indy website I found, I had to go through twenty or so to find it. There are some just awful sites out there. On top of that, some of the half way decent ones I found haven't been updated in years. Just because you are small doesn't mean your presentation should look small. First impressions are very important. You also might want to check your math on that 98% figure. I know you were probably just trying to make a point, but I feel I covered the range pretty fairly. As for your offer, as well as anyone else's, to find these fresh talents, I'm interested. If you feel that a site should be looked at, drop me a line at mikem@bluelinepro.com.

Thanks for the comments,

M2

Dear Joe,

Thank you so much for your reply. I really appreciate the help and time you have given me. I haven't been reading comics all that long - this is the main reason

for me focusing my dissertation on this median of story telling - so I can learn more about them. I have always been interested in the artwork, but always felt that it was a kind of closed doors world' to non-comic fans. Since starting my research I have found it to be quite the opposite - everyone has been really helpful. I am used to film types who will give you a fight before you can even speak to the assistant of the assistant of the assistant of the person you need! The reason for telling you all this is because I know that my questions seem a little vague - I am still finding my way through all this information so I'm still not sure on how to ask specific things or how to draw comparisons from past work. So, your opinion on the whole adaptation area is greatly appreciated. I am going to look at the first Superman movie, as an example of a good adaptation, and Spawn as, not a bad adaptation as bad is the wrong word. Mainly it's weak areas. I have chosen these two films when I have put things on message boards or have talked to fans. It seems that Superman has been the favorite, and Spawn not so. Spawn also ties up with the whole Sam and Twitch thing - so it provides a nice link in to the next chapter. Enough talking from me - I am sure you are a busy person and I have wasted enough of your time!

Take care and I look forward to speaking with you soon,

Claire Bee

Hi Claire,

I just realized another person you may want to contact is the writer of the 'Sam and Twitch' comic series. His name is Brian Michael Bendis, and he was just interviewed in Sketch a few issues ago. He's a very approachable guy and very wise in the ways of the film and comic industry. He in fact wrote and illustrated a graphic novel detailing his true-life exploits in the film industry concerning the adaptations of some of his comic books into film. He would be 'the' man to get in touch with. Brian could give you some hands-on experience in terms of creating the actual Sam and Twitch comic, along with working on adapting his own material for film in Hollywood. Superman would be a fine example of good adaptation versus bad (Spawn doesn't get much worse). The X-men movie, I feel, would be more timely, and just as fine of a good example. If you contrast that with Spawn it might prove that comics can be adapted successfully currently in the industry, since Superman was about two decades ago.

Thanks!

Joe

P.S. You may want to look into Brian Bendis' official message board to get more info and his thoughts and opinions on adaptations since he frequents the boards himself often... <http://www.wfcomics.com/boards/bendis/>

Hello, Mr. Maydak,

I wanted to write and let you know how much I've been enjoying your "Comics and the Internet" articles in Sketch. Your most recent article gave me some new online comics to add to my list of favorites. Thanks for being so thorough! You've included some "little guys" along with the "big names," and that's fantastic. The Internet is a place where self-publishers and small groups can really make some big ripples, isn't it?

I also wanted to let you know about the online comic magazine, BorderWalker, that I run at www.BorderWalker.com. We post fantasy, adventure, and comedy comics in all sorts of formats, from daily strips to monthly serials. I publish two of my own comics—a fantasy epic called Legacy Dawning and a manga-style comedy that teaches Japanese called Electric Spirit—as well as two other exclusives (Craig Schaffer's Backdraft and Patrick Harrington's Windy Gap) and a handful of cross-linked comic strips

(Including, coincidentally, BuzzBoy). If you have the time to check it out, and wouldn't mind giving me some feedback, I would love to hear any thoughts you have! My e-mail address is chris@BorderWalker.com,

if you'd like to get in touch. Thank you in advance for your time. I'm looking forward to your next article, to see how some online creators are making—or planning to make—money while keeping the comics free. I'm pursuing sponsorship for BorderWalker, in lieu of trying to sell banner ads individually. I see an opportunity to mimic the early days of television. Hopefully it will pan out.

Thanks again for the great articles. Please keep up the good work!

Chris Watkins

Hey Chris,

Thanks for the friendly compliments. I'm glad you're enjoying my article. Your site looks really good, as well as professional and entertaining. I kinda liked how your comics scrolled down instead of having to wait for another page to load after you're done reading one in a few seconds. There's a ton of comics to check out; it's worth looking at.

Thanks

M2

Hi

I am new to creating comic books. I would like to know where I could tell someone my ideas so that they would be made into a comic. I have lots of ideas. Also I would like to know if the books you sell come on disk, and where I can buy them. If you have a list I would like to see it. I almost forgot. Digital coloring, is that a CPU program I can buy and where?

Steve Wesley

Well, lets see here. Digital Coloring is not a program, but the name used for using programs that you can color with using your computer. Programs like Photoshop or Illustrator are common ones used for digital coloring. Check out a software store for prices. Second, we currently do not sell any of our books on disk. Lastly, go to comic conventions to share your ideas. That would be the place to start.

M2

Hi Bluelinepro!

I gotta say first and foremost that the imitators can't compare to the original you guys! I was just wondering when are you gonna have the art contest included in your web-site again? Or is it gone for good? I know that I had my mind set on trying to win some Strathmore paper! I love your products a... did I say that already? Anyway, I just self published my own comic book YAY and I used your pages to do it.

Thanks-a-Million for the quality.

Warren

That's great news. We're glad that Sketch was able to help you to get where you wanted to go. As for the art contest, we are currently doing some reorganization with our web site. As soon as things settle down we will be sure to have some contests up.

Thanks,

M2

I don't know how far ahead your artist interviews are planned, but I was wondering if you would ever do one with Joe Mad. I always love hearing him talk about his career and his art and your interviews are getting better and better each issue. I would like to see what kind of questions you would ask him.

P.S. thanks for making Sketch so great.

Peace,

Matt t.

Dear Matt,

I'm glad to hear that our interview section is improving—thanks for the compliment! As I've said before, everyone here is continually working in an effort to improve Sketch and work out the rough areas, giving you Sketchers great quality material every issue.

I'd love to interview Joe Mad, and no doubt there are plenty of others that would enjoy hearing from him as much as you and I would! If we can ever lure him away from the enchanted lands of Battle Chasers, we'd love to have him Sketch.

Thanks again for following us, and "peace" right back atcha! Take care, Matt.

Flint

Mr Henry,

First of all let me thank you for publishing my last letter in SKETCH it was a surprise for me that someone would post something from the likes of a "complex" person like my self. I hate to carry on the same conversation over the net because it takes so long for the conversation to end so I will try to make this short and to the point:

You said that SKETCH was carrying out interviews and talking to independent creators right along with the "scary big mainstream companies" and that makes me wonder that if you truly are having these interviews than why haven't we read any of them in any of the past issue's of SKETCH? Are you saving them for a rainy day? Are you waiting for the cows to come home? What is it? I'm not trying to be a bad guy here and I hope I don't come off as one I just would like to hear a few answers. If you truly are having interviews with true independent comic publisher's (besides the Todd McFarlanes of the world) then when can we read them? And you also said that most of the indy's contact you, and in a professional, courteous fashion, and I can only assume that you were stating that I was unprofessional and not very courteous in my letter. So let me explain, I am just a person expressing my feelings about how the market eats the little guys alive and how it CAN be prevented. Just like Beau Smith and how he say's there is a major need for change in this industry, that's all I am, an indy version of Mr. Smith. I express my anger in how the business is being run and I not only point out the problems but I try to tell possible solutions. I don't think Mr. Smith is unprofessional because he tells us to "paint a yellow stripe" down the backs of the publisher's that turn their backs on comics and kick em' in their butt's on the way out (SKETCH #3). He says what is on his mind to us little guys. I don't think that I am any less professional because I do the same to you bigger guys. Telling you to paint a yellow stripe down your backs for not trying to promote indy and not giving them a small shot at rescuing the market that the mainstream and Image destroyed.

And lastly you asked me if I worked in the independent market or am I a fan, and you said you weren't to curious so I shouldn't play your game and answer your question but the possibility of these words seeing print compels me. And the answer is that I am a fan first and foremost just like everyone else who aspired to "make it" in this business. And as for working in the indy market I have to say yes and no, I am creating my own book called "ROMULUS" and the first book is penciled and inked (by me). As for the "no" part of my answer, no I am not making a living off indy if that is what you mean by working in the independent market but hardly any of us are, but does that mean that I am to be written off. I don't think it should because every spoke in a wheel makes the wheel stronger, even the weaker one's. Someday I hope every one in the comic biz, including the established indy will come together and realize this and start protecting and assisting the weaker spokes. So what am I, I am a part of the comic industry that stands ignored.

A weaker spoke,

-JONMALIN

Hello Jon,

I'm glad you're reading Mr. Smith's column, and following his advice. He's quite the character.

That rainy day and homeward-bound cow will come, and so will some of our indy features. While it's not our intention to ignore anyone, you were certainly correct with your assumption of my outlook concerning your courtesy and professionalism. And while I'm not currently throwing any games, if you plan to enter the publishing arena, you may want to bring some cards and dice. Roll those bones!

I don't know that you're a "weaker spoke," Jon,

but you're certainly entitled to your opinion. Keep working, good luck with your Romulus book, and don't forget us when you become one of the Big Guys. Some of the other Big Guys already have.

Flint

Sketch,

I have just finished reading issue #7 and I finally decided to share my thoughts on this magazine (thank Beau Smith) Everyone is doing a fantastic job! Every issue is better than the last and I find the information you provide helpful and priceless. Flint's "Portfolio Noogie" editorial was well written and thought provoking. That will stick with me for some time to come. I'd like to share some suggestions with you about what I'd like to see in Sketch. Unfortunately, my imagination has an unlimited budget.

1. I'd like to see contributions/interviews with Brian Pulido, Tim Vigil, Brett Booth, Jim Lee, Joe Benitez, Pat Lee, Greg Capullo, Jim Balent, Andy Kubert, John Romita Jr., and the list goes on. As you've probably guessed by now, I'm a wannabe penciller.

2. More color! I know this will probably raise publishing costs but, what about selling advertisement space to publishers? Both big (Marvel & DC) as well as independent (Chaos! & Sirius)?

3. How about giving each column it's own distinctive look so that it helps differentiate the letters column from say Beau's editorial? (I know it's kind of nit picky. What do you expect from a graphic designer?)

4. Critiques. Wannabe artists like me could send in some samples and someone there or a guest "instructor" could critique them. You could print 1 or 2 of these an issue.

5. The cover. Excluding the Michael Turner and David Mack issues, the covers have been kind of bland. How about getting some original artwork by the artist featured that issue so that we drooling fanboys have one more thing to "collect"? In the case of Chuck Dixon, you could get art from Greg Land, Butch Guice, or any other pencillers Chuck regularly works with.

6. If you talk about someone's art in the letters column, could you please print it so that we, the readers, have a point of reference to look at?

In response to Ryan J. Davis's letter: There are no comic book layout programs that I know of. Besides, why would you want the computer to lay out your comic for you? That's what your limitless imagination is for! For those of you who "lost" their manuals that came with your "purchased" copies of Photoshop and Illustrator, check the QuickStart series published by Peachpit Press. These provide excellent information on how to use the application featured. You should be able to find them at Borders, Barnes & Noble, etc. for about \$20 apiece. Perhaps Blue Line Pro could add them to the catalog at some point in the future?

Thanks for taking the time to read my letter and I look forward to getting the next issue.

Jason Dunbar

P.S. Doesn't it suck that Wizard is the "be all, end all" in the comic book industry (for news and info)?

Whatever happened to Hero Illustrated and Overstreet Fan?

Hi Jason

Thanks for the letter Jason. I'm glad you decided to write in, and your imagination really does have an unlimited budget. As for your questions:

1. Those names would be great. I personally would look forward to some of them.

2. That would be awesome. Hopefully we will be able to do that down the road. You hit it right on the nose though: advertisers.

3. Noted

4. Sounds like a good idea. I'll look into it.

5. Hmm, that would be nice. Sketch as a collectible.

6. Good thinking.

As for your P.S., Sketch will reserve its comments and let our readers decide for themselves.

Thanks

M2

Greetings,

Let me start off by saying I really enjoy your magazine. It is a wonderful resource and informative magazine about the comic book business. I am in the process of working on a comic book as well as a CCG with a friend. I liked the article in Issue #7 about the CCG as another way for artists to break into the business. What I would like to see is more info on submission guidelines from the different publishers as well as the CCG people and another thing that might be helpful is information on printers and other ways people can get their comic printed themselves. I have done a lot of this research on my own but it can get frustrating for people who don't know where to start. I was lucky I worked for a major typesetting company for books and I deal with printers all the time so I have contacts that I can call and lead me into the right directions. But I'm sure other people would like to know whom they can contact and how.

I have one slight issue with the magazine. It was in Issue #7 and the article by Paul Sizer on 6 tips from Sizer. It was tip #2 on stretching type. Well, like I said, I am a systems manager and all around program guru. I have to disagree with him on that a font will look bad if you begin to stretch it and condense it. This all depends on what programs you use. See, I can open a font in Fontographer or Fontlab and actually stretch it in that program and when you generate the font you make sure it has a variety of the point size to display at. This will help keep the font looking sharp. Also, Adobe Illustrator and Quark are great for stretching type and making it look good. It really comes down to who made the original font. You just need to be able to control the line weights and all and Adobe Illustrator lets you do this. Know Adobe Photoshop is more difficult because it works in BIT map format while Illustrator Works in Vector.

Anyway keep the info coming. Thanks for your time
Matthew

Hi Matt,

I think you may have missed the point of my recommendation about stretching type. There is a difference between being able to stretch type and knowing whether you SHOULD stretch type, and how to do it properly. My stance on this is that yes, anyone can use vector based programs (Freehand, Illustrator) to alter and distort type, but I refer to knowing how to do it AND maintain the integrity of the font. If you look at my examples, you'll see how the stretched type has distorted cross-strokes and the ascenders and descenders of the letterforms are not in correct proportion. Maybe it's because I come from a very strict European typographic education/background, but this difference screams out to me.

As a general rule, I always do all my illustrational type based work in vector-based programs, and even if the type eventually ends up in Photoshop, I always generate it first in vector. Photoshop is getting better with handling type, but it still doesn't have the proper means of making informed typographic decisions about spacing, leading, etc. As I stated in the article, attention to details like this will set you apart from the many other people trying for a piece of the comics professional market.

Paul Sizer

Dear Sketchers,

First off I would like to say how amazing your magazine is. I just got a subscription with issue 6 and have been completely blown away with how great it is. I was reading the letters in issue 7 and noticed you got quite a few questions concerning copyrights. A friend of mine is a writer and turned me on to a trick called a "Poor Mans Copyright" (I don't know if that is the real term for it but it fits). I thought I would share it with you guys so maybe you could pass it on to your readers. The concept is simply take your work, whatever it may be music, art, stories, etc., completed or just what you have current then copy it, and place it in a sealed envelope. You may wish to include a signed and dated letter stating the work is yours and when it was done. Address it to yourself with your return address (I

believe this is important). Then apply proper postage and take it to your post office and mail it. Then, THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT, when you receive it in the mail DO NOT OPEN IT! This would defeat the whole purpose. The postage date on the front of the envelope is now your "poor mans copyright", at least until you can save up money for a real copyright or trademark. I was informed that this would hold up in court of law, unless the person you're suing has a predated real copyright. Then I'm sure you're screwed. This is not a official copyright and when you can I advise you to get a real one. But if you're usually broke like me it may just save you a murder charge if someone tries to rip you off.

Hope this helps some people out.

Twitch

Thanks for sharing that with us. I appreciate it, as well as probably many others. If your source is right, that is a good thing to know.

M2

Hello Guys,

I am trying like crazy to find the first issue of your magazine and it can't be found anywhere. All I need is the Digital Coloring article in the first issue. Is there a way that I can get it? I really love your magazine. I think the articles are great! But I really need that one article. Is there a way for me to get it? I'll keep looking in the comic shops but so far, no luck. If you can help me in this it would be great! Thanks .

Errol Williams

The only way to get issue number #1 is to get a subscription to Sketch and order it as a back issue. Since we have so few left, we reserve them for subscribers.

M2

Hello,

I was wondering if the Strathmore 500 series comics pages still have the annoying stamp at the bottom right hand side of the page. I have been using them for a while now and a few months ago they began putting the interfering stamp on them. I really want them to stop. Any answers?

Thanks.

Sorry about that but that's out of our hands. For as long as I know Strathmore 500 and 400 series have had the stamp on it. A sheet of Strathmore comes to us much larger than that of the finished product. We cut it down into the standard 11x17 size of a comic board. For every sheet we are able to get three boards, so every one out of three boards we print from the 500 and 400 series will have this stamp. The stamp is at the bottom corner and out of the way of the borders printed on it as much as possible. We hope to not have caused you any inconvenience.

Mike Hickey

I am currently doing a comic out of my home, still to be published, and I am inquiring on the task of lettering! What is the easiest, or more importantly, the best way to apply lettering to my pages? Any help on this matter would be of great appreciation to this novice comic booker!

Thanks,

DirtySid

Check out the Digital Lettering column by Ward Leroc. He covers it all about lettering, and if he hasn't, he will.

M2

Hi! I am 13 years old (keep age to yourselves please) and have awesome comic ideas. I have some of your lay out pages, very handy! Anyway, I dream of being a future animator but want to start w/comics. How old do you have to be to get your comics published? (I'm not planning on submitting any time soon but I'm very curious...) Also, where would I be able to submit them? How much do successful comics make?

Thanks

Anthony, N.Y.

It doesn't matter what age you are to make comics. It's mainly up to you and your skill level. With practice comes experience and with that you become better. Your age is really not that big of a deal, it's your maturity. I recommend going to conventions to compare your ideas with other. That would be a good place to start. As for how much a successful comic makes, well, just imagine some sum you think that a comic would make and divide that by 10... Just kidding, but you get my point.

M2

Paul,

One of the articles I enjoyed in the most recent SKETCH was your piece "6 Tips from Sizer for Better Designed Comics," especially the part relating to captions and word balloons.

I'm part of a self-published comic group of writers (we're currently putting our third book together) and I lettered for several stories in the second book. One thing I learned quickly was that it's definitely an art, and not just a matter of slapping the balloons just anywhere. That doesn't mean it succeeded each time, just that I now know more of what NOT to do.

I lettered two stories completely and two pages of a third in that second issue. The balloons and captions in my own story came out decently overall, though I look at them now and see what I could have done better. The main thing I would change now is to make the text just a hair smaller. The balloons I did for Ray's final two pages of his story were pretty much on the money I think, but the third story, Ellen's, had a number of problems.

We had several reviews from some online comics sites, and just about all of them mentioned the frequently confusing word balloons in this story. There WAS a lot of dialogue I had to work with, but it was my job to make it work — unfortunately I slipped here and there. But again, I now know more about what NOT to do.

I'll be doing the lettering in my new story for our third issue (it's called ANOMALY, by the way, and our little group is Brass Ring Productions) and I'm going to really work to make the text work as best as possible. In case you're wondering, I'm using Illustrator to place the balloons and captions. I hand-letter when I'm drawing my humor short pieces, but for realistic stories drawn by others, I want the lettering to be neater.

One aspect of lettering on the computer I really like is to be able to adjust the placement of the balloons as well as the breaking of the text, and kerning if necessary. In my day job I look at copy all the time and frequently have to fix widows and bad hyphenations and such. Also, your comment about the placement of the balloon pointer is right on. It is a subtle thing, but it DOES make a difference! When I look over my story I lettered in issue #2, I see that some of the balloons' pointers don't point exactly where they should.

Anyway, good article and some great tips!

Johnny Lowe

Johnny,

Glad you liked the article. As with most of my tips, it's usually paying attention to the small details that will set you apart from other artists. The artists and creators that I follow know this, so I'm glad to be able to pass the knowledge to others. Coming from a typesetting discipline as you do, I'm sure you've seen your fill of uninformed copyfitting. Thanks for writing! Keep on reading!

Paul Sizer

Those stepping up this issue to answer questions.

B / Bob Hickey

- M2 / Mike Maydak

- Flint / Flint Henry

- Paul / Paul Sizer

- Joe / Joe Corroney

As always we try to pass the letters along to those of us that have the most knowledge of the subject that your letter is referring to. And, if all else fails we leave it to our most trusted senior editor Flint Henry (That's why he gets paid the big bucks).



The Official Star Wars Edition of **BEHIND THE PANELS:** **Designing Star Wars Aliens!**

by Joe Corroney

A long time ago in an artist's studio far, far away...

There is unrest in the gaming community. Several thousand gamers across the planet have declared their intentions for a new role-playing game since the fall of the WEG Empire. These gamers, role-playing from hidden basements and crowded apartments, have succeeded in winning a new victory with Lucasfilm.

During a fierce licensing battle, Wizards of the Coast managed to acquire the rights to Lucasfilm's ultimate weapon, The Star Wars Role-Playing Game, a D-20 system so powerful with enough stats to destroy all competition.

Pursued by Wizards of the Coast's art director Kyle Hunter, Joe Corroney races home to his studio, custodian to art notes for the new magazine, Star Wars Gamer, that will restore him to freelance status and bring peace and justice to bookstores everywhere...

Welcome back to my regular feature! Park your landspeeder and grab a glass of blue milk as we peer through macro-binoculars at the creation process, step by step, of my artwork I created for the new Lucasfilm/Wizards of the Coast publication, Star Wars Gamer #1!

Every role-playing game has a beginning.

Before we discuss the artwork on topic, let's take a look back at when I began illustrating for Lucasfilm, and perhaps what it takes to become a Star Wars artist in the first place. Perhaps with some insider info, I can give out a few hints as to what companies like Lucasfilm and Wizards of the Coast are looking for if you are interested in establishing a portfolio and finding fame and fortune in the Star Wars universe.

My official work on the Star Wars license actually began late in 1996 when I contacted West End Games about doing artwork for the original Star Wars RPG. I had just graduated from the Columbus College of Art and Design with my degree and was very ready to take off with my illustration career. I had always been a major Star Wars fan, and was aware of the products that WEG was producing since I played and collected them myself.

It took a few different portfolio submission attempts and phone calls at first to get their attention, but I wasn't discouraged. In my second attempt I actually included more samples of strictly color artwork of Star Wars characters. My artwork was specifically geared towards the kind of content WEG was producing for the game at the time. As an artist it helps to research and know your client first, and to be as up to date as possible with current events as to what they are publishing. Characters, costumes, and even familiarity and flexibility with whatever styles they are using are key in impressing an editor for any publisher, comic book, gaming, or otherwise.

I soon received the phone call from an art director at WEG asking if I was available to illustrate on a freelance basis for the game. As I continually illustrated for the game from early 1997 to summer of 1998 I had amassed a substantial portfolio of Star Wars artwork, and had many published credits under my name. I feel that this, of course, helped me in securing more work with the Star

Wars license once Wizards of the Coast acquired it last year.

But just like many other artists out there wanting to illustrate for this great space epic and work with a prestigious company like Wizards, I had to prove myself all over again. This time, though, the stakes were higher and the competition more fierce, since a brand new Star Wars movie had since been released. And with a company like Wizards, as well as Lucasfilm, standards are raised, and you've got more to gain or lose depending on which side of the deadline you are on.

Hearing through the grapevine that certain RPG companies would be bidding on the license to create a new Star Wars game, I planned my method of attack. I attended conventions earlier in the summer of 1999, showing my portfolio to many of the gaming companies who would possibly end up producing the game, including Wizards. By making the right kind of contacts early on, and making companies aware of myself and my work, it allowed for me certain advantages later on. Most artists, unless they pay for a "rep" who finds work for them, need to know how to sell themselves. Confidence, good communication, and 'people skills' in general are just as important as skill with a pencil or paintbrush.

Months went by as I researched and hit up my contacts in the industry. I soon found out that just before they had officially announced it, Wizards had acquired the license. During this time of patient waiting I was developing brand new Star Wars artwork specifically for my portfolio, utilizing skills and techniques I had learned and adapted for other gaming companies I had worked for like White Wolf and Last Unicorn Games. Once the new game was announced I immediately sent portfolio submissions to a few of the art directors at Wizards I had met at conventions, as well as sending copies of my portfolio to names I was referred to there. I then proceeded to follow-up with phone calls soon afterward.

One of the art directors there, Sean Glenn, was very helpful, and key in getting me re-established as an official Lucasfilm artist for this new game. Sean helped me to rework my portfolio as to what styles Wizards would be using, and what he felt he and Lucasfilm wanted to see. He offered advice, criticism, and support for me (all the things a growin' artist needs) and I listened... and then I did what any smart artist would do: I listened some more. He already felt I had such details as costumes, weaponry, and likenesses down which, when it comes to Star Wars, are the very important basics. I only owe this to the rabid fascination I have as an artist with details in general, and in Star Wars there are so many cool details to notice. Of course having just about every Star Wars book, magazine, and comic book ever published, along with CD-Roms and zip disks filled with Star Wars picture reference also helps.

Soon Wizards announced they would be publishing a brand new Star Wars gaming magazine in conjunction with the new RPG, called Star Wars Gamer. Sean proceeded to put me in contact with the art director and editor handling the chores for this new venture, and soon I had my first assignment from them.

I actually took initiative by hooking up with an established Star Wars writer beforehand (who I had already become friends with), and created rough sketches for an article he was proposing to write for this new magazine. Just before I began working on these drawings I was informed that my portfolio had been approved by Lucasfilm. I was now able to illustrate and create for Wizards' Star Wars game on a freelance basis.

As the writing was being finalized, I had already begun sketching the characters so that when the proposal was completed, the Editor-in-Chief on Gamer, Chris Perkins, and my art director, Kyle Hunter, would receive a two-prong attack with text and sketches in the mail. The entire proposal was soon approved, and my art director assigned me to complete the drawings in full color.

The Marvel Menace

The proposed article involved the re-establishment of notable Star Wars aliens from the original Marvel Comics series as playable characters for the new game. Marvel's Star Wars comic books from my childhood were one of the key reasons I became an illustrator in the first place. In fact, I'll never forgive myself for leaving my copy of issue #50, "The Crimson Forever", out in the backyard one afternoon to get ruined by the rain.

The following is a list of each alien's description I received from the writer, accompanied by my initial rough sketches sent in with the proposal.

The Nomad Em'liy



Appearance and Biology

Generally humanoid, the Em'liy have lean, muscular bodies and yellow-tan skin, an evolutionary adaptation to the strong rays of their sun, Kavaan'oa. They are exposed to their sun on a constant basis, which has led to an increasing number of tumor-related deaths in recent years.

Em'liy wear their fine dark hair in long topknots to symbolize caste status and to inspire fear in enemies. The number of topknots varies from zero and three, depending on caste; otherwise, their bodies are completely hairless.

What mostly distinguish Em'liy from other humanoid species are their facial features... or, more accurately, those they lack. Their smooth, nose-less and ear-less faces show little in the way of sensory apparati. They have small, round eyes with no lids or lashes, and their thin mouth openings are practically lip-less.

Iskalonian



Appearance and Biology

Describing the "average" Iskalonian is not an easy task, for the School is comprised of six major aquatic species, with a few stragglers from eleven others.

The dominant species of Iskalon are the Inleshat, originally from Drexel II. With skin ranging from tan to green, they have long, silky hair, three webbed fingers on each hand, and wide, pupil-less eyes. The Inleshat have long, pointed ears that can hear underwater activity from miles away, a compensation for their species' poor eyesight.

Nagai



Appearance and Biology

Tall and exceedingly thin, with straight black hair and pale, almost white skin, the Nagai carry the appearance of handsome but emaciated specters. As a result, some fear them while others make the mistake of assuming them weak and sickly. The Nagai are aware of the effect their unique look has on other humanoid species and exploit it to the fullest, letting others under-estimate them until the time is right to show their true skills. Those unfortunate enough to under-estimate the Nagai do so only once.

Styles vary widely among the Nagai, but many wear their hair long and untied, hiding portions of their face like a half-closed curtain. This adds to their air of mystery, as does the seeming lack of standard uniform among their troops; every Nagai wears their own style of clothing, depending on personal taste and the image they wish to convey to their enemies. Again, this often makes others under-estimate their abilities, while also masking their presence as a military force.

S'kytri



SKYTRI
- JOE CORRONEY

Appearance and Biology

S'kytri are quite tall for humanoids, many surpassing two meters in height. S'kytri under 1.8 meters in height, certainly a respectable height on most worlds inhabited by humanoids, would be deemed "short" by their standards. The thin, muscular physiques and chiseled facial features of the S'kytri are considered by others to be among the most beautiful in the galaxy. As a winged species, they consider excess body weight not only impractical but also dangerous for flying. One would be hard-pressed to find overweight S'kytri.

The tall, slender, tapering wings of the S'kytri are not the only feature that drastically sets them apart from most humanoid species. Another is their skin tone. Nearly all males have pale blue skin, while the skin of most females is a soft shade of green. Hair colors range dramatically on Skye, from violet to yellow to white to maroon, and most grow their hair in thick, wavy tufts in the center of their otherwise bald heads.

Clothing is not that important to the S'kytri, for too much material creates unwanted wind resistance. Males wear anklets bearing the insignia of their clans, and both genders wear slight coverings to protect their reproductive organs, but little else is worn. The perpetually warm temperatures of Skye makes this unnecessary.

Stenax



STENAX - JOE CORRONEY

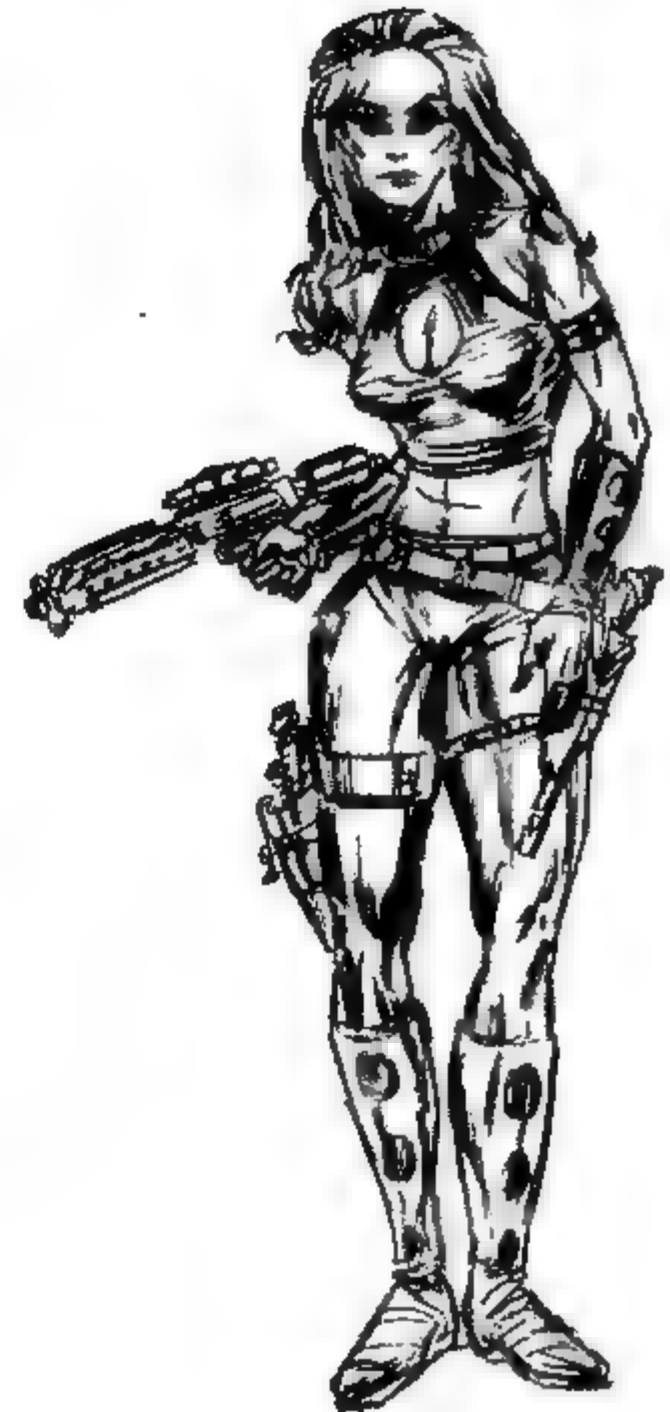
Appearance and Biology

The reptilian Stenaxes are quite a fearsome sight. Tall and thickly muscled, they have gargoyle-esque faces and a row of bony spikes running across their shoulders. Three sharp claws punctuate each of their feet, five on each hand, with additional spikes lining the backs of their calf muscles.

Stenaxes have scaly, purple-gray skin and white eyes with minuscule pupils. Their ears and brows are upswept at severe angles, due to thick muscular cords lining their facial features. Two such cords hang down far below the mouth like ancient stalactites. Completely hairless, they have a wide, spine-shaped protrusion running over the head, from their eyes to the top of the neck. This protrusion houses their kleti gland, which allows them to home in on objects on the ground when flying at extreme heights.

Of course a good tool for any artist just as important as a brush or pencil is having proper reference. So luckily, between the images handily supplied by the writer and my own rich collection of old Star Wars comics, it allowed me to narrow down the design process somewhat fairly quickly.

Zeltron



ZELTRON
- JOE CORRONEY

Appearance and Biology

Nearly all Zeltrons are devastatingly beautiful and able to attract numerous mates. Beauty is not just a standard on Zeltros – it's an entire way of life, and the pursuit of beauty and pleasure is next to divinity. Though humanoid, Zeltrons differ from humans in a few key aspects. Their skin is bright pink, a pigmentary reaction to the unique radiation emitted by their sun. Like the Falleen, they secrete a pheromone that is overwhelmingly potent, arousing those in reception range to such heights that few can resist their charms. They have conscious control of their pheromones and can affect, at will, either entire crowds of people or specifically intended targets.

It's not wise to upset an art director.

Once the sketches are sent to my art director and he has time review them, he contacts me with some new art notes, and we realize corrections are needed to strengthen the artwork. I begin to revise some of my rough sketches and to finalize the overall the look and nature of these characters.

The final pencil art is scanned and the revised drawings are emailed to my art director at Wizards, who then approves the artwork and in turn sends it to Lucasfilm for final approval. After the drawings are approved, payment is agreed upon and a deadline is given, I get the greenlight to render these colorful characters.

The following set of drawings is the pencil line art I completed as the next step of the approval process.





You must do what you feel is right of course.

For these illustrations I obviously chose the 'comic book route' in terms of style and final color technique. I wanted to keep these characters faithful to their original Marvel Comics roots but at the same time use the current computer coloring techniques seen in most comic art to bring them a bit more up to date.

The original artwork is penciled on 2 ply bristol board with vellum surface. As opposed to the plate finish, I prefer the texture in vellum bristol since I like how the graphite of my pencil interacts with the fibers. Using my Hunt 102 dip pen and Speedball India ink, I begin inking them. The above set of drawings is the final inked line art.



Photoshop. An elegant program for a more civilized time.

The next step was for me to scan each line drawing, and begin coloring using Photoshop in my Macintosh computer. Here's the break down of the coloring process:

First I scan the artwork as line art in bitmap mode, and make sure the resolution is 300 dots per inch. Once each drawing is scanned I convert them to grayscale (Menu bar>Image>Mode>Grayscale) and save them as TIFF files in Photoshop.

Next, I have to go to the menu bar again and convert them to RGB files (Menu bar>Image>Mode>RGB), which allows me to render this line art using full color.

Now I use my Layers palette (Menu bar>Window> Show Layers) and double-click the layer entitled 'Background'. A new window appears entitled 'Make Layer'. I name the layer 'Line Art' and click 'ok'.

I go back to my Layers palette and click the small black arrow in the upper right hand corner of the palette and drag down to highlight 'New Layer'. In the New Layer window I rename the layer 'Color Art' and click 'ok'.



Back up at the menu bar at the top of the screen I click 'Edit', and drag down to Fill. In the Fill window I select 'White', and make sure the Color Art layer is still selected in the layers palette. After I fill this entire layer with white I click the 'Color Art' layer in my Layers palette and drag it down under the line art area, which allows me to view my line art again.

I double-click the 'Line Art' layer in the layers palette, which creates a new window called Layer Options. In this window I select the 'This Layer' line that says 255, and drag it slightly to the left until it says 254. Then I click 'ok', which makes the white areas on the line art layer transparent but the black line solid.

I select the color art layer and begin to render underneath the line art layer, using color with the Airbrush tool and adjusting opacity in the Options palette. I also select a variety of brush sizes for the Airbrush tool by using the Brushes palette.

For rendering the water in the Iskalonian illustration and the smoke in the Zeltron illustration I paint directly on the ink line. I select the Line Art layer, and I draw a rough selection around the ink line representing these shapes using the Lasso selection tool from the Tools palette.

I then go to the menu bar and click 'Select' and drag down to 'Color Range'. With the Eyedropper tool I click on the selected black line in the preview image of the Color Range window and click 'ok'. This masks off the line work on the Line Art layer and allows me to paint only the selected pixels. This set of illustrations is the final full color artwork as it appeared in issue #1 of Star Wars Gamer.

At last we'll reveal ourselves to the art director. At last we'll have our finals.

Once the illustrations are complete I email the final TIFF files to my art director and hope that the Force is with me. I get the phone call that the finals are approved, and they are placed in the layout of the magazine to eventually be printed.

Not only do I feel the need to impress my art director and Lucasfilm, but I also look forward to pleasing the Star Wars fans that will be buying this new magazine, especially the die-hard fans who grew up on the older comics and remember these particular characters. Since I'm a die-hard Star Wars fan myself I'm my own toughest critic, which means I usually know when I've done the job right.

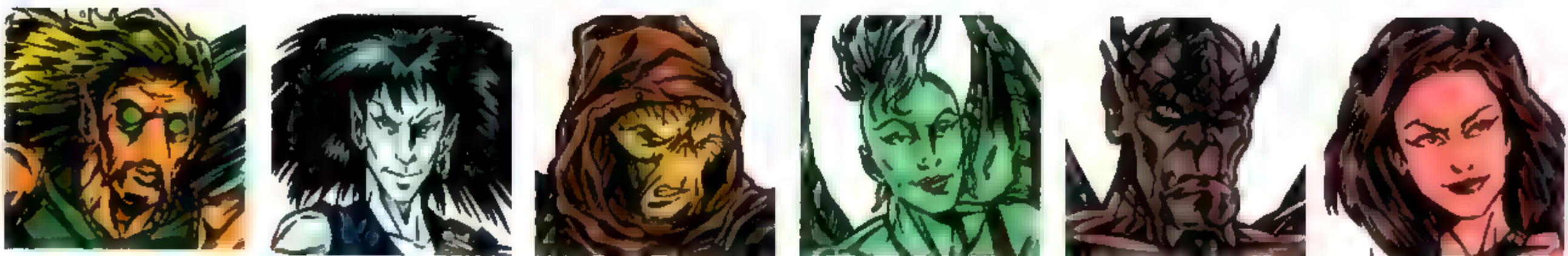
Adventure, excitement...hmmph... an artist craves not these things.

Of course I was very excited over this assignment. Not just because it was my first Star Wars gig for Wizards, but also because it reminded me of that little boy reading Star Wars comics on the steps of the garage and tracing pictures of stormtroopers on cheap type-writing paper. In a way, I think this project allowed me to tap in even deeper to the inner youth inside me...something I probably do as an artist and in my personal life way too often already. But I actually believe this is what keeps artists and illustrators in particular so creative in the first place. We aren't like "normal" people, who too often get caught up in the mundane, every day stress of the present world, or get too blinded by cynicism. By keeping our imaginations alive with comics, games, and movies such as Star Wars just as we did as children, we constantly look to the future with a creative eye. As artists drawing superheroes, monsters, or aliens we should hopefully continue to inspire the next generation of creative minds with our own artwork.

If you enjoyed this article and this behind-the-scenes look at my artwork, be sure to go out and pick up a copy of Star Wars Gamer today. Along with the short fiction and articles on all kinds of Star Wars games, there's plenty more great and inspiring artwork to be found inside. See you there, and back here in the pages of Sketch soon.

MTFBWY

-Joe



The following Wizards of the Coast crew need to be thanked for their assistance with this article. Without their help I wouldn't have been able to share this article with you, and I wouldn't be talking about drawing Star Wars art again in the first place: Kyle Hunter, Chris Perkins, Janet Cole, Sean Glenn, Jeff Quick, Shauna Wolf-Narciso, Mark Painter and the rest of the writers, editors, and designers on Star Wars Gamer magazine. Keep up the fabulous work, and thanks for letting this Star Wars fan be a kid again.

Thanks also to...

Rich Handley and Joe Bongiorno - for giving me the opportunity to draw for their fun article.

The SWFA - for the friendships made, and for their amazing wealth of knowledge and appreciation of all things Star Wars.

Iain Morris and the rest of Lucasfilm Ltd.- for approving my artwork, as well as this article.

And finally, a big thank you to George Lucas. Without his vision I probably wouldn't have become the artist I am now.

To view more of Joe's Star Wars art, along with the rest of his portfolio, be sure to check out his official website at: www.joecorroney.com

Joe Corroney is the penciler and co-writer for the upcoming Blood and Roses: Time Lords one-shot comic book from Sacred Studios. He's also focusing his attention on creating more Star Wars art for Wizards of the Coast, and teaching Comic Book Illustration and Electronic Illustration at the Columbus

College of Art and Design. In his spare time he teaches his two-and-a-half year old daughter more names of Star Wars characters.

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Daffy Duck said, “Shoot me. Shoot me now!”

Argh!! Will that phone ever ring? Are you trying to break into the fabulous world of funny books, and sweating out getting that latest batch of samples scrutinized by the submissions editor? Will you ever get that first assignment? Argh – why doesn't my phone ring – or theirs pick up?!! Maybe you're a pro with a couple or ten series under your belt, but worried about landing that next assignment during somewhat lean times? The market's up – no, down – no, stabilized! Marvel's dropping the code. And just what will Warren Ellis do in Planetary next month? Can't wait!

Lots of questions and concerns, but for all the unpleasantness you've heard about (or may be experiencing in) the marketplace these days, comics really is an exciting, fast-paced and challenging field. And depending on your views and expectations, it can be more rewarding than many others a creative person might move into. It can also present a wider vista of choices for you to make, personally and professionally.

Most creative individuals find that developing their talents to a satisfactory level requires endless hard work over the years, yet personal levels may exceed (or not) those required to be successful in a commercial profession; comics in this case. And if you're serious about comics as a vocation, you'll probably find that you've set yourself a goal a bit more arduous than you might initially have imagined, there are very few natural talents that swing effortlessly through comicdom's stapled gates to instant success. As you drive at your comics goal, it's sometimes necessary to let other things around you go. Sacrifice is necessary for success, but because most enthusiasts enjoy comics and so many closely related overlapping and intertwined fields and topics, often things just slide by unnoticed – how many times have you heard comics fans and pros on the end of a “geek” or “inbred” joke?

So while you're up all hours perfecting your scripting or toiling endlessly to master drawing that set of leg muscles from any position, try not to forget to view the big picture – your life's “splash page” - as well as your next frame. Like a good comic, life's a sequence of events, not just an isolated panel. Step back and get a bird's-eye view of yourself, your life, and your career...not just the stately yet ominous Xavier Institute. As you work and go through the various stages of your life and your art, there's a good chance that some of your goals, values, and opinions will change. As we gain, achieve, and meet new goals and people, others pass or become less important, some fall away entirely. That's the natural way of things – but we'll still claw to keep that Mego Lizard. So as artists and writers – and not just the person who works on Capt. Kpow – you'll be dealing with yourself and your surroundings on different levels than the person mixing concrete or working as a lawyer or dentist. I've said it before: Creative people are special people. And comic book people are *very* creative.

Who are your influences? Who, or what, inspires you personally or in your work, or both? Two of my fav creators jumped off this plane recently – Ed “Big Daddy” Roth and Joey Ramone. I've enjoyed the creative juice they've given me over my years at the board, and I wonder they might have brought to me in the future. A trivial example in the scope of things, perhaps, but I hope it serves. Just don't forget to see who and what is around you beyond, as well as within, Previews - and who is viewing you as a “surround,” what layer of others' pages are you on? As you work hard writing, drawing, or photoshopping away, record as much of your life as you wish, whatever your way. Currently you might not find things of interest or importance. Maybe you won't want the memories, or even their impressions, later. But at some point you'll find the act of putting these things down has helped you and your craft in a practical sense, if not a sentimental one.

Jung said “He who looks outside, dreams. He who looks inside, awakens.” A good artist needs to do both.

Then again, Daffy Duck said, “Shoot me. Shoot me now!” And I know which one I've quoted more frequently over the years.

It's all in the execution. But hopefully, keeping your mental framework open will make your comics panels all the more effective and accessible as well. It's your choice.

Keep Sketching.

Flint

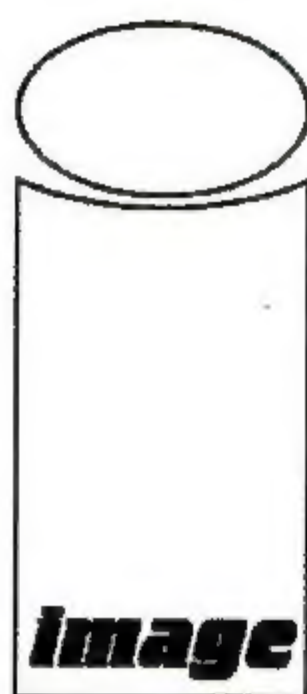
PARTS UNKNOWN

BEAU SMITH - BRAD GORBY

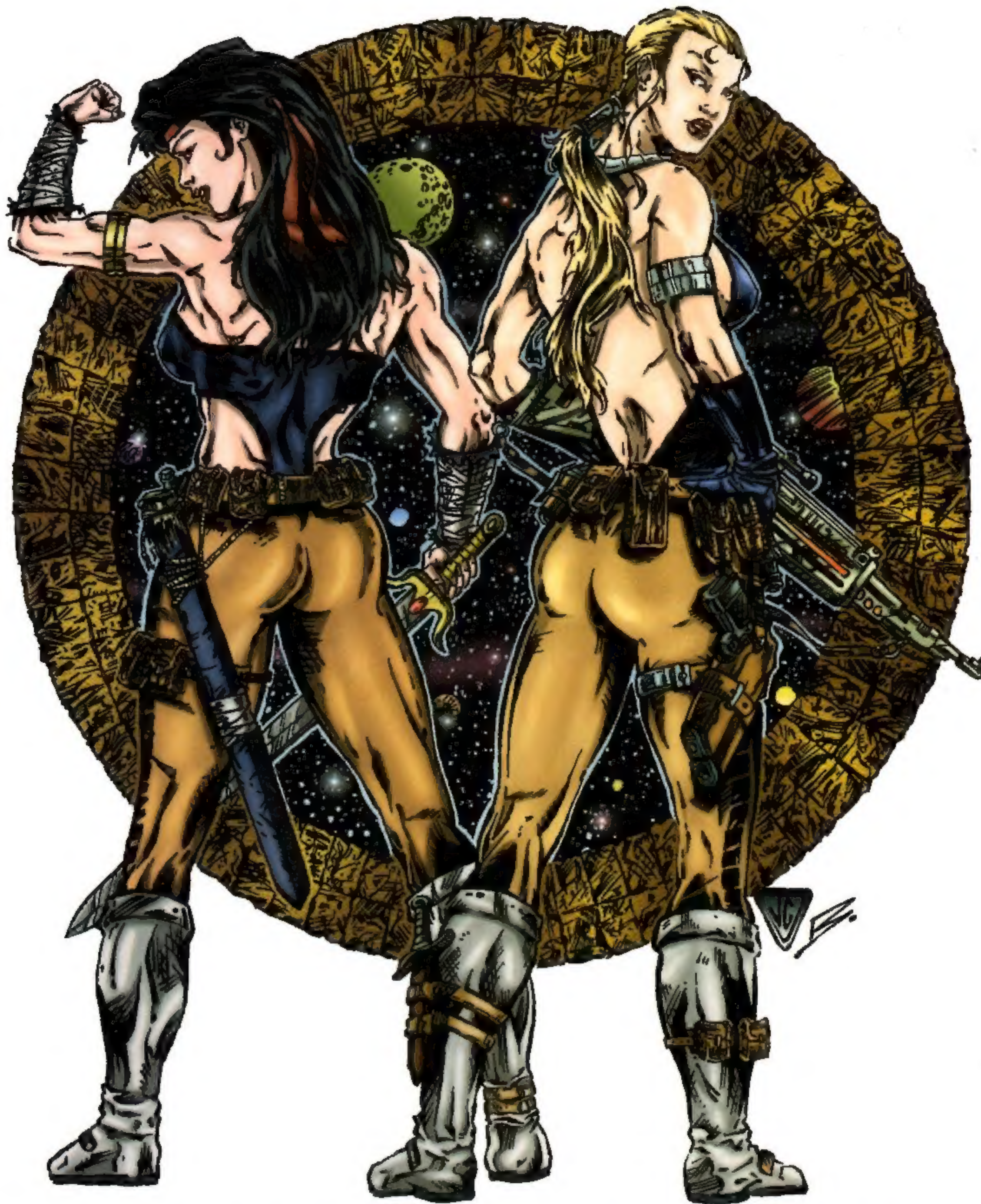
**We Have Your Woman.
We Have Large Guns.
We Have Nasty
Mood Swings.**

**Read
Parts Unknown...**

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